BIRACIAL INDIVIDUALS AND THE CHURCH: CONFLICT EVOLUTION AND DISSOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

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This project is a theology of identity. The focus is to address Black, White racial conflict in the family and church, its impact upon biracial and bi-cultural individuals. The objective is to identify the origin of conflict in the Bible, the evolution of race conflict, and its repercussions in the United States.

This is a team covenant model of ministry to enhance communication techniques. The purpose is to identify value with the attributes of God. The model format is: sermon, lecture, workshop and dramatic presentation. The results demonstrate transformation of identity from culture dominance to Christ centered identity.

PREFACE

Students are anxious for the day of graduation even though, final examinations will ultimately determine whether graduation day will be a tear stained day of joy or sadness. The celebration day arrives. They are the proudly attired future pre-medical students, pre-law students, hospital administrators, and city managers in commencement gowns excited to cross the stage from high school books and examinations to receive their diploma of celebration. Yet, an anxiety due to thoughts of college enrollment, grants and scholarship expectations do not negate the excitement. They have almost made the transition from high school football to college issues that will affect the international market.

The students have made their college selection and mailed the pre-registration material. Now, the day of registering in desired classes and checking into the dormitory room is even more exciting. When college registration is a time to initiate a new set of challenges, the administrations' team registering new students' confront a young biracial lady with race prejudice. The administrative team projects a "treat them all the same attitude." Culture shock and an identity crisis send a young woman back into the comfort of her high school days and family friends. The shock was that no one truly understood her dilemma.

This biracial youth, in 1995 walked into the doors of a predominantly black college campus excited to begin her college years only to be turned around by a world insensitive

to her identity crisis as different from that of a single race youth. The church and church family members viewing life out of their own experiences, cannot quite understand the issues faced by this youth. Unknowingly, a slave era label of identity chocked the life from a 4.0 youth with high expectations of a challenging future.

A very intellectual, talented and an exceptional student has a vague and unpredictable future because of an unexpected identity crisis in ways that the social order nor the church has an answer. The church must be prepared to transition from a unilateral view to a perception of the multi variable essence of a person. This transition requires each individual a transformation from a value system determined by the secular world to a Christ centered value initiating cooperative collaborative faith communities across traditionally divisive boundaries. This ministry model "Biracial Individuals and the Church: Conflict Evolution and Dissolution" is designed to equip ministry in a time of crisis to lead its members victoriously through the challenges of conflict into the twenty-first century.

Paradigms for the ministry of church administration for the next millennium must be cooperative and collaborative across previously designed economic, class, race, gender and institutional boundaries of demarcation. As divisive boundaries dissolve, cultural identities will be enhanced and appreciated universally. Tantamount to breaking down divisive barriers is the elevation of the one element that binds. Communication in an environment of trust empowers communities of faith to be transformed from a secular concept of life to a Christian concept and motivation in life.

An atmosphere of collaborative cooperation is necessary for the ascertainment of

the objective. The ability to listen without critiquing, judging, defending or solving is a goal toward fulfilling the objective. One objective in the project is to distinctly witness the Kingdom. Christ died a memorable death that all would assemble together at the cross joint heirs in the battle against evil.

This model of ministry is designed to mobilize each participant from a lower to a heightened level of Christian consciousness on an issue which is destructive in of the society and progressive in the annihilation of the church. The community devising solutions for racism have not viewed the impact of Black, White racism upon one who embodies both cultures. Racism has been addressed as a sin and a social evil. Publication promoting an attitude of racial tolerance of different cultures dominate the shelf space in the book store concerning race in the United States. Christian educational material provides steps toward behavior modification for the church. The need for individual transformation is not included in the written work.

Twenty-first century challenges require twenty-first century solutions. Mysteriously, the dissolution of conflict is based upon identifying the evolution of conflict. This model is designed to retrieve the gauntlet of Christianity from a twentieth century identification of racism as sin in a vacuum to a twenty-first century cognizance of the individual ownership of the existence of racism. A second objective of this model is to be instrumental in the transformation from individual ownership to individual responsibility for the dissolution of conflict.

This author extends sincere gratitude to her sons Iotha Roberts, III and Dorian Rae Roberts for their dedication of time and expertise during the extensive time required to accomplish this mission. A heartfelt appreciation is extended to my mother, Mrs. Sara S. Claude, for all of her prayers and my father, Eugene Thomas Claude, whose death played a major role in my faith journey. A special thank you to my younger sister, Brenda Adams for calling often to say keep on Gwen for all of us to celebrate. A sense of deep appreciation is extended to Grace AME Church and all who were valuable contributors to this project. The author is grateful for the support extended by the United Methodist Church family. Exhortations and praise to both mentors for their never failing encouragement: Dr. Edward L. Wheeler and Dr. Susan D. Newman. A very special gratitude is extended to President Michael G. Nickerson and the United Theological Seminary faculty and staff for their technical expertise and spiritual support on this pilgrimage. To God be the Glory.

To God Be The Glory

All Honor and Praise

but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise,
God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong
I Corinthians 1:27

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AME	African Methodist Episcopal
Blk	Black
Bi-R	Bi-Racial
Bi-C	Bi-Cultural
Col	Colossians
Dt	Deuteronomy
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
Est	Esther
Ex	Exodus
Gal	Galatians
Gn	Genesis
Heb	Hebrews
JHWH	Jahweh
Jn	John
Jb	Job
JTC	Jesus The Christ
KJV	King James Version

KKK	Ku Klux Klan
KISS	Keep It Simple Strategy
Lk	Luke
Mt	Matthew
Mk	Mark
Prv	Proverbs
Ps(s)	Psalm or Psalms
Rv	Revelations
Rom	Romans
RSV	Revised Standard Version
USA	United States of America
Wht	White
1Cor	I Corinthians
2Cor	II Corinthians
1Jn	I John
2Jn	II John
3Jn	III John
1Sm	I Samuel
2Sm	II Samuel

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Individual needs have a controlling influence upon ones' life choices. University Psychology courses teach the theory of needs and particularly, Maslow's Theory of the Hierarchy of Needs.[1] College and university business administration curriculums encourage an awareness of Maslow's theory on needs as necessary training for future entrepreneurs and business executives. Administrators are taught that the human primary needs are basic psychological and safety needs. Leadership and administrative training incorporates the necessity for understanding that the secondary needs have an importance for human mental wholeness: love, esteem, and self-actualization.[2] The ecclesiastic community has a major role in the lives of its constituency and the care for community life. Effective ministry must become cognizant of Maslow's Theory on the Hierarchy of Needs in building and sustaining faith communities. A church cognizant of the human needs includes in its planning continues processes of the evaluation analysis of its ministry to effectively minister of a communities needs.

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[1]Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper Bros., 1954). Quoted in B. Lewis Keeling and Norman F. Kallaus, Administrative Office Management, 11 ed., (Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing, Co., 1984), 13.

[2]Ibid.

Jesus, often called the prophet from Nazareth, with foreknowledge of humankind ultimate need, addressed the needs of people in building a community of faithful followers. Christ provides the most fundamental need with the broadest impact upon earthly life and life eternal. Spiritually united with the Spirit of God provides the most fundamental need with the deepest impact to sustain spiritual peace and joy.

As an individual strives for peace and joy through the attainment of primary need fulfillment, and encounter obstacles, God confirms God's power to provide fulfillment inspire of those obstacles. God as the all knowing, ever present, all powerful and sovereign power is consistently suppling humankind's deepest need. Whereas the church must purposely plan programs to assess needs and benefits, God's mindfulness of one is a blessing. The psalmist in the 115th Psalm wrote, "The Lord has been mindful of us the Lord will bless us".[3]

Ones assurance of God is the fulfillment of a need greater than the primary needs of food, shelter, clothing, water, and safety can provide. The assurance that one is on the mind of God provides blessings even beyond Maslow's identification of the secondary needs of recognition, companionship, love, esteem, and group recognition. All needs have their ultimate fulfillment in God as expressed in the psalmist diagram of the essence of trust in God.

> Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from this time

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[3]Ps 115: 2 RSV

forth and forever.[4]

The church as an institution to implement the work of God through those called to ministries is confronted with the same dilemma concerning needs association and total ministry as confronted Jesus in laying the foundation for the church. Ministry as performed by individual is predominantly addressed from an individual's perspective. Perspectives are limited by personal experience or experiences conveyed by others. The impact of limited experiences are therefore narrow in view. Effective ministry requires the transformation of the individual human mind and heart to become receptive of a point of view different from one's experiences.

A major detriment of a limited perspective is that individuals have a limited sense of their essence. The consciousness of ones spiritual being is negated as precedence is given to the physical being. An overwhelming sense of ones' physical presence in the world lures the human mind to be focussed upon the physical environment. A mind immersed in the physical existence is limits the possibilities of God's power within the boundaries of an earthbound existence. Further more, an individual immersed in the physical environment and that which is earthly is held captive in an earth bound focus by the presence of desire earthly things which project the capability of the fulfilment of needs.

The Bible records in Matthew, Mark and Luke Satan's use of his limited power to lure Jesus with the fulfillment of earthly needs. Satan proceeded to demonstrate to Jesus his power over the primary needs of food and safety in addition to the secondary needs of

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[4]Ps 125:1-2 RSV

wealth, love, esteem and self-actualization. The master tempter in opposition to the will of God that all should be saved, demonstrates his power to manipulate earthly desires to lure humankind into earthly goals with promises of earthly rewards. The same enemy who confronted Jesus on numerous occasions continues to confront and lure humans today.

Biblical accounts reveal that individuals as well as crowds were constantly manipulated by earthly primary and secondary needs. One example of Satans manipulation of individual and group needs is witnessed in the accounts of the crowds response to Jesus in the parousia accounts. When Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judea, questioned Jesus after Jesus' arrest, it soon became obvious that Jesus was not guilty of any crime. Pilat recognized the peoples' jealous plot. As was his custom to free a prisoner at the time of the Passover Feast, Pilate questioned the crowd as to whether to free Jesus or Barabas who was a Zealot and a robber. The crowd's response was to free Barabas. Barabas was accepted and Jesus rejected because of a people with needs determined by the physical environment. Too, the crowd was insensitive to Jesus' ministry which would fulfill the ultimate need for a faith based life.

A faith determined life provides the individual with an identity in Christ. An identity in Christ has sustaining power when earthly dreams are unattainable. Individuals in pursuit of their dreams, soon become aware that some are attainable only in the will of God. When personal hopes and dreams are in vain, God provides a sustaining power for a joyous life. The spiritual heart has leads individuals to connect with the source of an undying, never failing power. This model of ministry is designed to promote the recognition of a need beyond the fragile primary and secondary needs which are so easily

abused, broken and stolen. Trust placed in that which is fragile will cause an individual to exist in a state of a continuing drive to possess the fulfillment of earthly needs. Whereas, the style of ministry that Jesus offers provides peace and undying joy in the presence of the destruction of primary needs.

Exemplary of a ministry to meet the needs of people is demonstrated in the records of Jesus' earthly ministry. Hungry people were fed even before asking for food. Males and females were given the opportunity to a saved life through the ministries of Jesus. His outreach ministry was one of sight to the blind, mobility to the lame, restoration to the leper, health to the diseased, direction to the wealthy and poor, and revival of life to the dead.

Jesus, the Nazarene, never lost sight of the ultimate focus of his ministries to lead, to guide and to restore persons to a saving faith in the Lord. Jesus' legacy and method are the foundation upon which this model of ministry has its existence. It is a model which addresses a need identified by this community and many others in the world. Individuals have a need for an identity. The physical environment makes a vain attempt to provide individuals with an identity. However, that earthly focussed identity is flawed and must be transformed to an identity which is sustaining. Therefore, the ultimate purpose and proof of success for this model are the transformed lives of the participants to an identity with Jesus. The transformation has revived the participant's identity to a stronger need to minister saving faith in the Lord to the community.

The subjects of this model are biracial individuals and their families' and their need to resolve conflict within themselves and in their relationships. Biracial youth, though

attending church school classes, church school conferences and active youth in the local church recognized that something was interfering with their faith journey. An element of a secure identity was missing. The absent element was an impediment to their growth in faith. Their identity was a source of constant conflict.

As people in general receive personal affirmation or rejection through the eyes of others, the biracial youth of Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church were experiencing rejection from both racial components of their identity. They brought this concern for self affirmation to the church leadership. The constant challenges of their identity from home, school, work, and church were causing an ambiguity in their identification. An ambiguous identity promotes a distortion of self worth.

The dissertation is designed to briefly follow the spiritual autobiographical journey of the author from an environment and hereditary identity to a Christ centered identity with endless possibilities. Chapter one initiates the process from one individual's faith growth to growth for many. The faith journey evolving from the transformation of focus becomes the guiding force in the model. The writer's personal faith journey is used to innovate the focus group, context and population toward the transformation of heart and mind which will result in a changed perception. Therefore, the context for the model is described and the need for the model is identified. At the close chapter one, the synergism of the two components, autobiography and context is a guide for understanding the pursuant model.

Chapter two is a statement of documented material available on the biracial community in the United States. A major source for the development of the model has

been the autobiographical and biographical documents on biracial persons. Also, the sources reference some investigation of identity issues written by others. Nevertheless, the case documentation were instrumental for developing this ministry model to resolve the issues confronting the biracial community.

The third chapter provides the foundation for this project as relevant to the mission and ministry of the church. Biracial youth attending Grace AME church are in social activities, school programs and participate in community recreation however, they saw their identity crisis as a spiritual dilemma. Any issues which become an impediment to one's faith and spiritual growth requires an answer from the church.

The fourth chapter is a narrative introduction to the replicable model. The thought provoking and emotional stress of the issues of identity require adequate scheduling for the maximization of benefit to each participant. Included in this chapter also are the pre-prerequisites for the project. The varied modes of learning and retention are introduced as fundamental for the project: audio, video, written and participatory. The model presents information in the form of four sermons, six workshop and seminar sessions combined, a focus group session and a dramatic presentation by the members of the focus group. Again, the legacy of Jesus' model of a communicating, participatory ministry is the method incorporated in the subject ministry model design .

Chapter five allows the reader to experience the atmosphere of the actual group encounters of this model. Some examples will be relayed to validate the power of the components of the model upon the lives of the focus group, context associates, the population and the community. Each component had an over-lapping effect upon the

population. For instance, the sermons presented during morning worship can not be considered the only contact of the population in understanding project. In addition to recording the events, a method for monitoring progress is charted in this section.

In consideration of future efforts to implement this model, reflections from the project are presented in an administrative format. Most beneficial for a church preparing to replicate the model is to understand the administrative tools necessary for implementation. One section of the model was modified to include an additional workshop to aid individual transformation. This revision to the model is described.

The ministry of Jesus' model which equipped eleven and continues to transform lives today is a legacy to the church for effective ministry.

SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Thorns Among the Roses"

Introduction

Faith, described by the author as God's blossom was witnessed very early in the life of the second eldest daughter of Eugene Thomas Claude and Sara Shaw Claude. When the blossom of faith was witnessed on Christian television programs and in Sunday School classes, Gwendolyn Yvonne Claude wanted to possess that kind of faith. She not only wanted to possess it, she needed a powerful faith for a reason unknown to her family.

The television ministry conveyed the message that sick people could be made well in response to faith. Sunday School taught that peoples lives were positively effected by their faith in Jesus. This faith was needed by the author whose childhood nick name was Baby Sister. Faith was required for fulfilling her responsibility to support the father's effort to be cured of ulcers. Father's health was tenuous and faithful praying was the answer.

The Sunday School teacher in Muncie, Indiana was enthusiastic and taught enthusiasm in loving and serving the Lord. Even the pictures in the Sunday School classroom conveyed the need for faithful living. The Bible revealed accounts of peoples' lives many whom had been blind for years were given sight and the sick were healed. Jesus, could even bring the dead back to life.

As a child watching a parent plagued with ulcers and a mother's face strained by the fear of continuous illness, a biblical faith which could heal the sick was a very much

needed blossom. Therefore, a little girl weighing only 32 pounds going into elementary school wanted the largest blossom with the deepest hue and richest fragrance at the top of the rosebush of life. Unknown to a mind so young, this faith journey would entail confrontations by life's detours. In spite of those detours a strong faith would be accomplished primarily by the lessons from brushing against life's thorns while reaching for the largest rose.

Faith Challenged Early

Opportunities for growth seem to come predominantly through challenges to ones' existing faith. Primary years in elementary presented Gwen with a powerful challenge to her existing struggle with faith.

Attending Washington Elementary School while living on Monroe Street in Muncie, Indiana was a joyful time yet, would become a period of time to be reflected upon often. As a very playful and curious child, the back yard became the established boundaries for outside play. A first time event occurred within the boundaries of the play area allowed to the Claude children. While playing in the normal area, a message from God was perceived. It was a message of care spoken to Gwen's heart. God said, "I will take care of you." Though playing was always filled with excitement, to hear God was beyond the child's imagination. The child was excited to share this event with her mother, the person who would become her life confidant. Baby Sister, known as Gwen, ran into the kitchen to tell her mother the good news. The actual good news to Gwen was that she had attained the necessary faith for her father's healing to occur. A breathless and excited

Gwen, told her mother that God had spoken to her heart. Gwen shared the essence of the message that God had spoken words of care to her heart. An overwhelming joy filled the child as the truth of the event was realized.

"Now, dad could get well because his cherry tree climbing daughter had stopped focusing on climbing trees to eat cherries long enough for God to grant sufficient amount of faith." Gwendolyn always believed that her limited faith was the void in the family prayer circle.

Eugene, previously an assistant pharmacist in Tennessee who became a laborer in Indiana was truly the head of his household. However, the father of the Claude children was confronted with an illness that persisted. His battle with ulcers in providing for his family persisted. Brief hospitalizations for treatment became a normal way of life. However, one visit to the hospital became the last. As always, the children were assured that their dad would not be in the hospital very long. Therefore, the children were to get themselves ready for school, keep their grades up and help Mom at home.

On the day that Eugene was to return from the hospital a different set of events occurred. The school age children were at school while their mother went to the hospital to bring their father home. A younger sister was at home waiting with a baby-sitter. During the school day a telephone message was received in the office of Washington Elementary school from Mrs. Sara Claude, mother of Pattie and Gwendolyn. The secretary rushed from the office to notify the Claude children, Pattie and her younger sister Gwendolyn, of the instructions to go home immediately. Almost running home with the excitement of seeing their father, the Claude children were told upon their arrival that

their father was dead. The strangest thought came to mind, "How could the sun shine so bright and the sky appear so clear when my Dad had died?" Eugene T. Claude who was the protector and provider left the family alone. Faith in God was challenged by the death of a familiar role model and a sense of personal death of identity. Family and heritage have a major role in the identity of the offspring. Yet, the Claude children were being cut off from that which appears vital in providing strength to overcome the world's obstacles. A message from God which had brought such joy was now the source of ambiguity.

Identity and Faith Challenged by Transition

Second grade was proving to be a period of pain and transition. The death of their only grandmother, Mrs. P. Wimberly Shaw, known to the Claude siblings, occurred several months before the father's death. The paternal grandmother, Mabel Briton Claude, had died when Eugene was only nine years of age. Therefore his children, left to morn his death never knew his mother. The bridges of genealogy were being severed by an uncontrollable component. These children were learning that the nature of life in its harsh reality is progressing toward a physical death.

The father's death meant packing boxes, loading furniture on trucks, leaving close friends, departing from the enthusiasm of Sunday School, and a favored cherry tree. Fear lingered near. Like other things left behind, the fear was that the memories of Dad would be left, also. The mind said remember everything now; "Dad, who taught that young ladies do not swing their hips, young ladies do not sit on boys laps, young ladies do

not climb trees, and always obey your mother, a message sent home by the back side of his hairbrush."

Surprisingly, God was aware of the new location for the modified Claude family. Clarksville, Tennessee would become the family residence for several years. A lesson to sustain life's journey is that God' power and authority is limitless and boundless. Sara Claude, now the matriarchal head of the family, was employed as an elementary school teacher. After reviewing the limited income at the Bachelor degree level she decided to return for her Masters in Special Reading Education. Her responsibilities as a teacher and community leader created new responsibilities for the Claude siblings. Even though Mom's affections were on short supply and intermittent because of earning the income, she helped maintain a sense of security for all. Though she was not in the church every time that the doors opened, spiritual and moral training of her family was a priority. The children soon realized, between God and Mom the children could not fail.

A graduation in the family was an event to mark the continued blessings from God. Burt High School, Clarksville, Tennessee was the graduation site for Gwendolyn Y. Claude. Special days were difficult too, because of the reminder that Eugene was not a physical part of the event. The family was always encouraged that prayer is a powerful tool in sustaining a relationship with God. It was a relationship that never had to die.

Gwendolyn graduated fifth in her class, and was Presented the Allen Summers Memorial Scholarship for four years to attend the college of her choice. Graduation from high school brought ambivalent emotions. Joy in accomplishments, an acknowledgment of the sustaining strength of God's power, and the strength witnessed in the life of a mother

were life's blessings to celebrate. Celebration is needed as transition ushers in the anticipation of roses and anxieties of thorns.

Adult Pursuit of Needs and Spiritual Growth

A high school graduate, in college on a four year scholarship, singing in the church choir, a member of the junior usher board, the keys to the future were held in these hands. However, earthly accomplishments distorted the true benefits of continued growth in faith. A combination of these minor worldly success and a new sense of the chaos of this world as a political science major became stumbling stones to growth.

With two years of college courses complete, a reality of the world's connection was being communicated. Some former classmates had completed two years in the Vietnam war. Politicians and their constituency were arguing whether it was actually a war since, war was not declared. A revolving issue for young college black students was, why were so many young Blacks drafted. While reading the local newspaper of the recent war deaths was a former classmate's name. This was the first war casualty from the graduating class whose members declared to change the world. The hopes, dreams and plans of youthfulness were confronted by the harsh reality of ones own immortality.

Death and the loss of identity with former classmates had major repercussions for the remaining members. Life situations communicated to the mourners the harsh reality that a future was not guaranteed regardless as to one's carefully designed plan. Carefully designed plans loss their credibility. A marriage to have occurred upon college graduation was no longer a certainty. Again, death was the controller. Beginnings of new

life with honeymoon excitement at the age of nineteen, the birth of the first child at the age of twenty and the family complete by the age of twenty-one with a second son revealed the need of security by connecting to life. The thorn of the fear of death and separation was instrumental in expediting early adult years. However, in the middle of fear of loss due to war, were the roses of marriage to the high school sweetheart and two beautiful, healthy sons.

God Saves

The Roberts family, father, mother and two sons living in Nashville and completing educational pursuits is the arena for a reflection necessary to reach another rose of faith. Waiting to ride the bus at the intersection of 8th Avenue North and Jefferson Street, a car of men drove their car to the curb in an attempt to force the waiting young Mrs. Gwendolyn Roberts into the car. A telephone booth near was perceived as the most immediate means to escape from danger to safety. The driver, drove the car against the door to the telephone booth blocking any means to escape. The anxious Mrs. Roberts, looked in her purse for a coin in order to use the telephone only to discover the absence of change. Without any means to escape, she remembered the only trustworthy, ever present, all knowing God. Placing the telephone to her ear she asked God to protect her life. Before the prayer was complete, a police cruiser drove its front bumper against the back bumper of the men's car. When they saw the police, they drove away immediately. This rose of faith was a startling reminder to the mother of two toddlers, the necessity of conveying the enthusiasm of the Muncie, Indiana Sunday School teacher to the Roberts

children while they were toddlers. It is always amazing that thorns and roses of life are so closely connected. This life phenomenon of thorns and roses on the same vine of life is a continuous reminder of the complexity of knowing God in God's fulness.

Resistance To Transformation

The monumental act of God in creating opportunities of faith growth has to ring the message loud in the adult ears, whereas a child will receive a whispered message transmitted message. Adulthood responsibilities began to block the reception of messages. Serving as a Christian parent, working with children in need of direction, and serving the church had provided a comfort zone. This limited faith life was comfortable. Adequate crutches were in place to maintain this comfort. As a military officers' wife, socializing opportunities were present. As a concerned parent, volunteer work at the school was rewarding. The telephone service in the home meant that family communications were accessible twenty-four hours of a day. The military hospital, commissary, Base Exchange, and recreational activities provided an unincumbered. Crutches have a very ordinary appearance and are very much a valid part of life until they become necessary to validate ones existence and sense of identity. The Lord has a way of removing ones crutches allowing for the bruises of the thorns for the growth in faith which is the opportunity to pick another rose.

The Roberts family was transferred from military life on an Air Force Base with all of the securely placed crutches to Izmir, Turkey, where crutches could not be found. Identity and a connection to one's roots certainly were missing in a Moslem country.

A sense of community was lost with the absence of a centrally located military family housing; a language barrier with the nationals, only limited access to public telephones in the Turkish Post Office; those lines had limited access to the United States through Europe.

A telephone call to the United States could take several days and weeks to get a connection. Politically, the country was governed by Military Law. All streets were constantly patrolled by Turkish military carrying M-16's with a round of ammunition across their body. If an individual should step on Turkish money he or she could be shot. The reason for immediate action was because all money had the face of Dr. Mustafa printed on it and to step on his picture was unlawful. Life in a country quite different from life in the United States was a challenge for one's identity. An atmosphere of total separation from one's identity in life caused reflections about the true source of that identity. The thought comes to mind, "Who are my sisters, my mother, my brothers?" [5] They had always been one means of self identification.

A father and mother's love and genes could never be removed therefore would continue to be a part of a child's identity. Nevertheless, the time had arrived in this faith journey to stop looking for identity in vain genealogies rather it was time to seek a life fulling identity in the spiritual family of God. The acceptance of the new family meant God as Father and Mother; creates the relationship of joint heirs with Christ, and a continuous abiding presence of the Holy Ghost. The adult version of the skinny, little girl who played so long ago in her backyard in Muncie, Indiana, who could hear God

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[5]Mt 12:49 RSV

whisper, now could hear the whisper of God's voice again.

The message came again, "Gwen, I will take care of you and I need you to study hard to prepare for the work to which you are called." This was the time to pick a larger rose of faith, a little closer to the top of the rosebush. The testimony of the author's call from God on Sheir Eshreff Bey, Izmir Turkey was soon to be witnessed in places and parts of the world never before visited.

In This Life You Will Walk Alone

Definitely, God was the guiding force for victorious survival without reliance on the world's crutches. Therefore when least expected, a lesson has a purpose in God's plan beyond the limited human vision and mind can perceive. The archer of trials and test in this world held a thorn drawn back in its bow about to pierce this young woman's heart and bruise the sacred institution of the family. The father of the Roberts' sons, high school sweetheart, and life confidant decided that a minister for a wife was unacceptable. This young couple had moved from the struggle of college years, travel around the world to a life of some financial security. The family had returned to the United States; were in the process of buying the families' second tri-level brick home; became the owners of three cars with a two car attached garage; the sons successfully and honorably graduated from high school and the family attended church. This account attest to all of the indications for a successful marriage however, this family was detoured to divorce court and separate lives. Only God could have known this future lay ahead in the life of the woman called to serve and ultimately to recognize her identity in Christ. The Lord knew

that she would have to stand alone. The capacity to honorably stand alone could not be provided by the misconceptions of an identity determined by the physical environment.

Lessons From a Nursing Home

The calling of Gwendolyn was a responsibility that she had to fulfill. Therefore trust in God would continue with the knowledge that God cares. As the matriarchal head of home, Gwen acquired a more concise understanding of the trials of her mother. She assumed financial responsibility for her family. She continued to attend Payne and later United Theological Seminaries. A field assignment as Chaplain at Greenwood Manor Nursing Home became a permanent position. In this capacity Gwen learned a valuable lesson from the wheelchair generation. A familiar saying at the home was that one is handicapped only if God is handicap. Handicap is a human made term to denote that one person is less than equal with other creatures of God. The heartfelt phrase most often used by the clients was that people are physically challenged.

The Christian clients of Greenwood Manor Nursing Home refused to be identified by their environment. They had experienced a transformation to a new identity that allowed them to minister to the minister. In the middle of the thorns of death, deteriorating physical form, and loss of speech and memory, God provided a blossom. This continuous struggle for a stronger faith with many challenges leads to a life of brushing against the thorn while reaching for the rose.

Connecting With the Context

Spiritual challenges have been a way of life as a female pastor and minister in a traditional, historic and predominant Black denomination. Too, the episcopal system can be conducive to an isolated ministry experience for pastors and particularly female pastors. The message from God to identify with Christ becomes even more necessary for effective ministry. Nevertheless, God equips individuals for service and one must be in prayer about a dependance upon those things and people which can become crutches.

Family, friends, acquaintances and co-workers are blessings never to be mistaken as crutches. Rather, the response to God's blessings is avoid the abuse of those blessing even though, persons are available for encouragement. This life of brushing against the thorns and being bruised while reaching for that largest rose with the deepest hue and the sweetest fragrance had taught, strive for the rose of faith because the Lord has a blessing for one's identity.

This journey has defined the essence of this ministry model to which the author is called. The most validating identity that sustains when primary and secondary needs is joint heirs with Christ. When one is oblivious to locate potential resources to supply primary and secondary needs, as joint heirs with Christ and sons and daughters of God all needs are fulfilled. Bruises of the thorns and the faith of the rose on the same vine continues to be a mystery and yet promotes leaps of faith. As one with many healed bruises from the thorn, God has identified ministry.

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.**(bruised)**.....[6]

The biracial children of Grace, and every community in this country are bruised by the dominant power struggle in the United States between Black and white community. The church can no longer consider itself the bride of Christ and inflict pain and oppression on an element of society.

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[6]Lk 4:18-19 RSV

CONTEXT-GRACE AME CHURCH

The Value In A Dollar

Introduction

African Methodism, as it began in Logan County, Bellefontaine, Ohio with a very small gathering of believers, could not have known the number of souls over a period of 130 years that would find refuge in a building purchased by the founding families in 1865 for seven hundred dollars. Recorded in Plot Book, Deed Volume 42 Lot 151 in Bellefontaine, Ohio, Logan County is the current and only recorded site of Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church.[7] The spiritual value of the initial investment of $700.00 is yet to be realized by society as a whole. Many a soul that found solace in this cathedral like edifice of red brick and stained glass windows cannot attribute their peace to the building, rather to the spirit of the people who have been worshiping in this church with a mission of proclamation in deed as well as in word.

The current worshipers have decided to place their membership at Grace AME Church for some of the same reasons as the founding families. Four reasons are confirmed in the records of the church: First, was the need to identify an independent place of worship; second, to serve God in their own style; third, the need for cultural, social and economic security; fourth, the need for identification enhancement. Bellefontaine was a station for the underground railroad in the early history of this country. Former slaves and their families sought refuge in this area and some established their homes in the

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[7]Ohio, Logan County, Bellefontain Plot Book , Deed, Vol.42

Bellefontaine area. The major components of the early church were a social gospel and a church community that validates the proclamation of the gospel through its actions. These components continue to play a major role in the life of the church today.

The population in this area is described as both culturally diverse transients and founding family residents. Therefore, individuals seek an institution which will allow them growth in their mode of life whether transient or stationary. An opportunity to worship God in the spirit of ones heritage is a continuous need in this community. Individuals pursuing their identity in a continuously evolving identity crisis environment, create a greater need for an unincumbered worship environment. Minorities have identified with an institution which provides support and has an appreciation for the evolution of identity. For instance, the evolution that has taken place in self identification from Negro to Black and now African American requires the support of a community for stability. As person who has an African American parent and a European or Asian American parent, seek a sense of identity, they too need a community of faith for stability.

History is concerned with acquiring knowledge of past events and systematically analyzing and evaluating that information in relation to the current situation. This content paper includes a synopsis of the history of the African Methodist Episcopal church. A primary focus is to review the issues involved in its founding and continuation. Also, the history is reviewed in relation to its impact upon the local church in Logan County. An understanding of the current context also relies upon an understanding of the demographics of the historic community and its influence upon the former and current context of the worship community at Grace AME Church. Furthermore, the culture and diversity of the current context is analyzed and evaluated in relation to the information available on the founding families. The history of the mission work in the church and African Methodism in Logan is relevant to the challenges of the church today.

A Synopsis View of AME History

The 1700's in the British Colonies of America, can be described as a period of religious and social transition. In the middle of transition, cultural, religious and political issues were being challenged. Issues of religious practice and moral behavior were topics of discussion on all social levels. America, as a young colonial holding, was faced with determining traditions and morals applicable to the current situations which would also shape its future. Such a decision did and continues to include identifying valuable traditions and a willingness to discard those traditions determined which do not add value to the church and society. Tradition has determined practices which have the appearance of being detrimental to spiritual growth. Some traditions have been proven detrimental to unifying a people behind the mission of Christ. Some traditions have led to oppressive practices of religiosity above Christianity.

Political as well as religious positions created dissension within families and the nation as a whole. Societal and religious conflict threatened the survival of individuals in society. American Protestantism could not avoid these issues relevant to the survival of individuals in their congregations. One of the greatest moral issues facing the church was and continues to be race prejudice. European Americans established definite class boundaries determined by race that identified themselves as superior to Native American Indians, African Americans, and Asian Americans. A continuous battle to establish a concept of superior which delegates superior cultural qualities to European Americans and relegates inferior cultural qualities to African Americans and other minority cultures.

Methodism could not boast of blazing trails contradictory to the status quo on

establishing and maintaining racial boundaries. African Americans worshiped in the same churches with European Americans. However, the seating of the African American was in the area of the church labeled the "black pews" or the balcony. Inequality was evident. Separatism in worship became such a crucial issue that it resulted in the birth of the first independent black denomination. It was in St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia during altar prayer that the African Americans were told they could not kneel to pray until the European Americans had completed their prayers and moved away from the altar. Richard Allen, a young African American, was present at St. George's Church and one of the first among the other African Americans present to reject this practice, with the initial response of walking out of the church. This action was the initial movement to resist the worship practices dictated without representation. A quiet movement would result in the establishment of the independent African Methodist Episcopal Church as a denomination. The church as the arena in which to challenge traditional social practices of degradation is not new.

Though painful, a breach birth is yet a birth. The inequality that African Americans experienced in the Methodist Church led them to create their own structure where they could be free. They endured the pains of birth and growth upon separation from the Methodist Society. Persons of African dissent, striving in the Methodist faith, held a general meeting in April 1816 to address the issues facing them and to find possible solutions. The members proposed the following:

> "That the people of Philadelphia, Baltimore and all other places who should unite with them shall become one body under the name of the African Methodist Episcopal Church."[8]

The founding church has a lesson for the church. History has taught that the church is people. Individual spiritual needs must be considered in the mission of the church. A church focussed upon meeting the spiritual needs of its membership become one operating toward a uniting goal. A unified effort can organize to accomplish mission in many ways to work toward effective ministry in a community.

A Mission Field

Bishop Morris Brown organized the Ohio and Western Conferences of the AME church in 1833. At Columbus, Ohio in 1845, the Ohio Conference provided documentation of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Logan County. Two mission fields were identified in the state of Ohio. Bellefontaine in Logan County was identified in the northern mission field. A mission function for the church was and continues to be the work of identifying situations in which persons of African heritage were denied rights and privileges granted to persons of the majority race. The missions' goal was to provide survival support for persons living under oppressive conditions. The gathering of AME believers in Bellefontaine, formed Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church which is presently located in the Springfield/Xenia District, of the Ohio Conference. The Ohio Conference is one of three conferences in the Third Episcopal

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[8]The Doctrine and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church 44th.ed. (Nashville: AMEC Sunday School Union. 1993), 8.

District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

One dilemma to be faced and addressed by each generation of the church is how to remain current in its identification and how does it appropriate tools to labor in the church's mission field. Rather, the church has a continuing responsibility to remain relevant to the issues facing its constituency as a leader in providing care and an environment supportive of faith growth opportunities. The early church identified social and spiritual needs which resulted in the development faith communities.

Demography of the Area

Bellefontaine, meaning beautiful city, was originally a village founded in 1820 by Blue Jacket, A Shawnee Indian Chief. Stories were circulated in the early community of a Frenchman as the founder of the city of Bellefontaine. However, records verify the original founders of the community as Native Americans. Seneca and other American tribes were located in this area of Ohio. After European American pioneers began to settle in the village, a diverse cultural ancestry evolved: Arab, Austrian, African Belgian, Danish, French, Greek, Hungarian, Portuguese, Polish, German, Irish, Italian, Romanian and Portuguese. Growth and assimilation in this area led to the loss of individual identity for the American Indian.

Also, Bellefontaine, Ohio is located close to two metropolitan areas. It is approximately sixty-three miles northeast of Dayton, and approximately fifty miles northwest of Columbus, Ohio's state capital. Though the community reflects changes in the families who live in Bellefontaine, the census bureau records the statistics for 1990 as

remaining constant with the previous years. The total population is approximately 12,150 people with a median annual income of approximately $25,000.00. A single family unit with a female head of household is the predominant family structure. The predominantly female head of household structure is reflected in the age groups 18-25 years and in those who are 65 years old and upward. The racial composition of the total population is as follows: European American 92%; African American 6.1%; American Indian and Aleut 0.2%; Asian and Pacific Islander 1.5%; and Hispanic 0.6%. The Census Bureau for Bellefontaine does not record the biracial community. According to the census, the biracial community has not been recorded and for centuries have been recorded primarily as Negro. As the research continues to confirm, a persons history is their identity and the biracial community's history is camouflaged.

Grace Community Past and Present

The trustees of Grace AME purchased the former church building on the current site from the German Reformed Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Bellefontaine Examiner recorded the transaction as follows:

> "On September 9, 1865, the Trustees of the Grace AME Church consisting of Washington Mays, William Johnson and William Hamlin purchased from the Trustees of the German Reformed Evangelical Lutheran Church consisting of Solomon Shaver and George Shack, this piece of ground with a small frame church on it. This was located in the rear of the present one and it was approached over a bridge across Possum Run"[9]

Very little is known of the social order of the early church. The information

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[9]Bellefontaine Examiner, 30 June 1972, 81: 169.

available identifies a male only Trustee Board which, would have been consistent with the time period. A double door entry identified the order for one to enter the original building. Women and children entered through one door while the men entered through the other door. However, the dedicated efforts of both men and women were necessary for the task of erecting the new building. Again the Bellefontaine Examiner provides insight into how the building was erected.

> To name a few, Lucy Payne, Judith Griffin, Minerva Stewart and Priscilla Boyd took in washing and donated their money and Levi and Sam Bass and Kellis Jackson donated their labor to the building of the church.[10]

Money earned from washing and ironing paid for the material. A coordinated assignment of task to the membership of skilled and willing laborers, provided the cost effective completion of the current structure in 1890.

The skilled laborer remains the predominant labor component of Grace AME Church membership. The component of a laboring class, in the past as well as in the present provides cost effective opportunities for the church to renovate and make capital improvements beyond available capital. Recent capital improvements by skilled community volunteers and members saved the church on capitol improvement cost. If contracted in the market arena the expense to the church would have cost approximately $45,000.00. Instead, the renovations were completed for approximately, 1/3 the market cost.

An historically all male Trustee Board now, has a different appearance as the women of the church have gained a competitive stature for Board vacancies.

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[10]Ibid.

Gender is no longer the determining factor in voting for members of the Board. The individual expertise is a major factor in the voting process which, determines Board membership. Education, position training, and job capabilities have caused the voting body to consider women in the selection process.

Though the Trustee Board and the Steward Board continue to be major boards of the church, a consistent review of the mission of the church in consideration of its constituency has determined a need for an additional number of ministries. Grace is always ready to retrieve the gauntlet of mission ministry and carry Christianity to new heights.

Direction From the Helm

The direction and mission for the members at Grace were and continues to be predominantly identified and determined by the leadership. Under the administration of The Rev. W.G. Maxwell, the construction of the new facility was a major focus for the church. During his administration, the current building was planned and constructed. The records of the church state the greatest accomplishment as the completion of the construction for a pleasant building for worship.

The next significant accomplishment occurred with the 1915 church improvements, under the leadership of The Rev. H.H. Upthegrove. Rev. Upthegrove was a circuit minister. Grace was on a circuit with other churches pastored by Rev. Upthegrove.

The names of many pastors, who did not lead the church in building projects or major outreach programs, have been forgotten entirely. Nevertheless, the continued

existence of the church in the community, verifies the significance of the contributions made by the ministers who served African Methodism in Bellefontaine, Ohio. Some of those not quite forgotten were included in the 1972, Bellefontaine Examiner article on Grace's history.

> Some of the pastors who went to make up the history of the church in addition to those already mentioned were Rev. Patterson, Rev. Turner, Rev. Mason, Rev. Mitchell, Rev. Lowe, Rev. Singleton, Rev. White, Rev. H. Anderson, Rev. Harvey Beasley, Rev.Gary, Rev. Tate, Rev. Barksdale, Rev. R.A. Latimer, and Rev. McPherson. In later years, Rev. Charles Harper, assisted several pastors until his death. Sanford Hicks, although not an ordained minister served the church for years and a clock now hanging on the wall was in dedication to this fine gentleman.[11]

Records of the pastoral administrations between 1922 and the 1951 were not available. According to the 1958 Conference Minutes of the Third Episcopal District: Annual Conferences, Rev. William McPherson was the pastor of Grace at that time. In the records of the local church history, the mention of a pastor is omitted until the activities of Rev. Samson Cooper's social programs in 1961.

During Rev. Cooper's pastorate, a church bowling league was formed and the congregation enjoyed fellowship with their sister churches in the area. Also, attributed to Rev. Cooper's administration was the acquisition of a parsonage. A Warranty Deed dated October 31,1961, confirms a transfer of property, Lot Number 1391 from Wallace Edward Means and Leila A. Means to Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church of Bellefontaine, Ohio at the purchase price of $1.00. During this time an organ was added to the church for the enhancement of the worship experience.

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[11]Ibid.

Between 1961 and 1978, the church continued its growth and facility improvements under the pastoral administrations of Rev. Lewis and Rev. Clifton Brown. During the pastorate of Rev. Lewis, the church purchased a new gas furnace. Rev. Clifton Brown is credited with the beautification of the exterior of the church.

Spiritual leadership from 1978 through 1991 is more thoroughly documented. During that time significant contributions were made by the following ministers: Rev. Walker, Rev. Harry Watson, Rev. John S. Gaitawa, Rev. Olimpio Lopez, Rev. Roscoe Andrews and Rev. Earl Hicks.

Annual Conference anxiety was at it apex during the final session of the 162nd Session of the Ohio Conference for the members of Grace AME Church, in 1992. Grace had struggled for survival under the dedicated ministry of Rev. Earl Hicks who was plagued by serious health problems. Prior to his administration, the church had experienced a pastor who left the church without notice in the middle of the conference year. As the newly appointed presiding bishop to the Third Episcopal District, Bishop Henry A. Belin, Jr. read pastoral appointments, fears, reservations, hopes and prayers reached their peak. In a precedent breaking act, Bishop Belin appointed the first female minister Rev. Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, to serve as the senior pastor of Grace AME Church.

Grace is an example of pastoral leadership dominated by persons of male gender. Nevertheless, they have graciously met the challenge. The church continues to identify mission as identified in 1845 to uphold the rights of those of African heritage who were denied rights. History proves that Grace is a community who will follow a ministry

dedicated to the uplifting of persons in their area.

Vision By Revelation, Mission By Faith: Where Do We Go From Here?

Upon arrival at the church, the new pastor, in a meeting with the church treasurer and the Pastor's Steward was informed that the church had only $5000.00 in the church account and that same $5000.00 was already obligated for required expenditures. A serious evaluation of the membership roster of thirty names revealed an urgent challenge. The deletion of in active members to work in the church reduced the numbers even further: three were unknown to the stewards; ten were sick and shut-in or in a nursing home; one was a college student living outside the area. The concern for human resources to provide ministry was amplified as eight trained and willing saints died in the first few years of the new pastorate including the Pastor's Steward and the Associate Pastor. The records clearly identified the most immediate mission for the survival of the church. Bellefontaine's Grace AME Church, Israel's's remnant was in the "valley of dry bones," in a mood of hopelessness and sliding into a state of despair. According to the book of Ezekiel 37:1-14, God is the only power to provide life in that which is dying or dead. Only God can cause the dry bones to live again.

It is the reality of the love of God for God's people, that life is rejuvenated. A word few in letters, encompasses a broad meaning. The mission was to communicate God's love, to teach and train for the development of faith and opportunities for growth in faith. Therefore, the immediate response to the call of servicing a people unknown to the pastor was to know the people and the culture. The mission for an outsider to know the

persons in this community is more than just recognizing a face or name, rather, it means to convey the love of God indiscriminately and without condition.

As this theology of ministry becomes the life force for the church in developing a model to minister to a recently identified need, Grace is the fertile ground in which God chose to drop the seeds of the Biracial's identity conflict. The ministry of love faced the opportunity of spiritual growth through the acceptance of the thorn of ignorance. Grace was not the only church operating in the vacuum of ignorance. Without reservation she accepted the challenge to find the rose that God had provided in pursuing a solution in this area of conflict.

Membership Composition from 1992-1997

The membership of Grace African Methodist Episcopal church is predominantly composed of the grand parent generation. Grandfather and grandmothers are reaching out to spiritually feed their grandchildren and children in their neighborhoods. Grandparents, once identified with 20/20 vision, healthy teeth, thick and long black or brown hair, now wear glasses, have false teeth and gray hair yet, they hold fast to faith in the power of Jesus. It is the geritol generation that now brings the music video, computer generation to church for spiritual development. It is the music video, computer generation that questions or challenges the church to provide them with spiritual growth.

The geritol generation ranges from incomplete elementary education to college graduates. Informal education and job training compensates for the minimal number of persons with formal education. However, this generation continues to value education for

its character development. Therefore, the youth are encouraged to strive for a college education. This is a community of people who stress the importance of the development of a strong work ethic as a prerequisite for achievement. The broad base of educational advantages is a reminder to maintain the basic truths of business administration. Always apply the KISS test, the keep it simple strategy in developing ministry.

The membership of Grace serves the community in many areas of employment and volunteer work. Small business entrepreneurs provide services in printing and publishing, city sanitation, health care, domestic services, construction, custodial and building maintenance, distributorship and early child hood development. In addition to the large businesses which are located within the city, Bellefontaine's ideal position between two metropolitan areas has been a source of employment opportunities. Federal grants and programs have also been valuable in providing jobs, training and networking opportunities previously unavailable. Several members serve the community in positions on city commissions and boards. The experiences and social connections of these individuals are expertise necessary for developing the ministry model.

Historically, Grace AME church has been a predominantly Black Church. References to a Black or African American Church includes persons with one or both parents of African American heritage. Currently, Grace is predominantly a Black Church, even though it has an integrated adult membership. This congregation has a strong youth participation which is 90% biracial youth which is slightly higher than the percentage reflected in the community.

The ethnicity of Grace AME church plays a major role in living out the mission of

the church in the world. Traditionally, worship services in Grace and in the community in general have been segregated. The historical precedent that children resulting from the cohabitation of a Negro and any other nationality were labeled by the predominant social order as Negro continues as the norm. However, the children who are the product of interracial relationships have a need to claim their dual identity which, in many situations means reconciling two historically and consistently conflicting cultures. Literally, these children are biracial and have placed their church membership in a congregation where the program has been designed to meet the needs of persons confronted with the challenges of living in an environment that oppresses ones freedom to live harmoniously in God's world. Literally, the children are biracial individuals whose identity has become imprisoned in the prevailing attitude of society.

Church records, much like the census, identifies anyone with one African American parent as an African American. The black Church and the black or African American community have accepted any child which, is the offspring of a person of African or black ancestry as Black without regard to melanin degree. This universal acceptance has a positive as well as a negative impact. White spouses or mates of black members are regarded as Black. The biracial children are accepted as Black. In one respect this response of acceptance to the white spouse is an emotional need for family unity. Family, historically in the African American community is considered a valuable asset. However for both persons Black or White, acceptance as an emotional response is short-lived due to the insensitivity to cultural differences that exist and the presence of unresolved cultural conflict. This same tension between acceptance needs and cultural recognition of diversity

is a constant struggle as diverse cultures interact. The biracial child is continuously caught in the culture struggle. Identified as African American, the child also has a Caucasian reality that is ignored, suppressed, or dominant depending upon the nucleus of the family structure. The need for a new paradigm, a new sense of what it means to be both Black and White is obvious if cultural diversity is to become a meaningful reality in the 21st century. Cultural diversity and its impact upon individuals, churches and the social order are major issues in the secular and ecclesiastical communities in this country as well as in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

Beyond Camouflage

Grace AME in 1992 began and continues to grow due to the continuous improvements in its' ministry processes in response to an increased acknowledgment of God's power and purpose for humankind in the world. The local church administration had to focus the internal structure toward the revitalization of outreach ministries and the creation of others. The needs of people demanded the discontinuance of programs no longer applicable to the lives of its people.

The worship experience was the first concern. A call went out to the "who-so-ever-will" choir to sing the songs of Zion until the opportunity to formally organize the choir. The agenda of the day was for those who seek to do the will of God stand up without regard for race, gender, age or economics. The worshiping community became participants in the worship service which resulted in their evangelizing the community. As the community became involved in the worship, and became increasingly aware of the

growing need to evangelize, financial support by the membership and community increased. Blessings were no longer considered a matter of luck. Obedience to the will of God brought the faith necessary and the result was blessings. A new and renewed sense of God provoked people to become leaders in evangelistic programs. The programs required additional training which led to leaps of growth in the individual participant's faith life.

Programs were initiated and organized in accordance with The Book of Discipline that were vital for the return of life to dry bones. The new life changed the faith community from description of scattered valuable people not cohesively working to a united people for the edification of the whole. Once more, the church was beginning to serve the needs of its constituency.

Both men and women assumed leadership roles in the development of new life in the church as they became instrumental in the following ways:

- Home Bible study classes
- One evening a week Bible study and prayer services
- Development of a Church school curriculum for the different age groups
- A five to ten year capital improvement and investment program
- The incorporation of a Total Quality Management style of administration
- Sponsorship of community projects across racial and beyond denominational boundaries
- The development of an educational program that awards scholarship to graduating young adults

The sisters and daughters Vashti, Esther, Mary Magdeline, Dorcas, Lydia, Anna, Joanna and Eve along with the brothers and sons of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim and Manassah, Gideon, Joshua, David, Obed, Philip, Timothy, Onesimus and John have found their identity and a continuously evolving mission laboring for the Lord.

In the middle of this faith explosion, there is room for growth because hyperbolically, unplowed ground lies yet to be tilled and fertilized. Beyond the walls of Grace and in other churches in the community are bruised and longing souls who have not identified a better way of life in Christ. Some of the spiritually bruised have been brought to the church by parents and grandparents but previously they did not receive a ministry to address their specific bruises. A very general evaluation of the membership of Grace reflects diverse backgrounds, cultures and racial heritage. Within this diverse populous can be found some the same weeds of dissention which plague our society. The assimilation of cultures with inherent conflict is a role this congregation is charged to accomplish. Christianity is on trial and each one individually and collectively have assumed battle armor, the spirit of the word in order to witness Christ in the world.

With a 90% biracial youth community in this church, struggling to grow into the adult church to witness Christ, the most adamant struggle is to eradicate the components which sustain concepts of divisiveness. Mental and spiritual stability of the youth are questionable as their Black family deny the child's White heritage and their White family deny any relationship with the child because of their Black heritage. In open discussions with the biracial children their ambiguous feelings toward their birth family are revealed, such as "grandma loves you better than me because I am dark".

Two basic emotions necessary for building relationships within families, churches, communities and races are trust and freedom. Trust is motive oriented. Freedom is to possess ones identity without a sense of threat by another persons' identity. The history between Black and White demonstrates that both trust and freedom have been violated; almost irreparable.

Interactions across racial boundaries have created a milieu of distrust even by the choice of words. The etymology of the same word reflects different cultural implications predetermined by racial disharmony existent over a century. Also, individual motive is plagued by the weight of the historical precedence of animosity. Usually in a situation of emotional insecurity, the traditional connotations of trust and motive surface as the main characters in some interracial interactions. The need for status which is as ancient as Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden continues to plague persons who have not found freedom. This freedom removes one from the carnal focus to a spiritual focussed identity. The biracial person is imprisoned by negative connotation of trust and motive between persons of different racial heritages. These tensions have been identified in the families of many of the children in this context.

Grace appears to reflect the tensions present within the larger society as articles of racial tension surface in the newspapers and the court systems. Biracial juveniles and their parents are moving from family and self control to the controlling power of the judicial system. This project is designed to reach beyond the camouflage of life and arrive at a point where camouflage is not required nor desired in human relations. This present context identifies new missions for the church. This project occurring in a small to

medium size church in small town USA is laying the foundation for an opportunity with global repercussions. Success in developing a new paradigm for addressing this aspect of diversity will benefit humanity in defeating boundaries of divisiveness. Christianity should be the guiding example in defeating boundaries of divisiveness.

Christianity commands that the walls of animosity built by the bricks of bias, hatred, malice, a sense of superiority and jealousy be toppled. The church must be instrumental in the ressurrection of the conept of building bridges of reconciliation and binding lives in an harmonious relationship with one another and God. In order for the walls to fall, many of the traditional anti-Christian foundations even within Grace, have been unearthed. Those foundations are flawed and provide inadequate support for any realistic partnership for the building of bridges between black and white people.

Ultimately, trust in God and freedom in Christ is required to build the bridge for collaborative cooperation. Not until a predominant number of church "people" have a willingness to bury the sin of superiors' need for an inferior and trust in the freeing power of Christ will the Christian community truly witness Christ and the gospel message to the world.

SYNERGY OF CONTEXT AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Liberating the Bruised

Identity is important. One's pilgrimage on earth can be considered an adventure, for certainly, the future though carefully planned is yet a mystery. A young girl very much identified with her father as her hero continues life on earth when he does not. A person must face the reality to live a productive life even though the pain of loss of a hero may clutter that life's journey. A determination to live with Christ has the power of turning life's events once considered clutter into stepping stones toward a more faithful life.

The clutter of racism that identified mission in the founding of an AME church in Bellefontaine has now become the stepping stone to helping a newly identified oppressed people to realize their identity in Christ. Grace AME has since its founding years ministered to persons of African heritage. Traditionally, this mission was identified with persons considered singular in race, Negro. The church has re-identified mission as service to God and humankind rather than to a people classified by the prejudices of humans.

Most emphatically, the Lord uses that which is foolishness to the world to perplex those who consider themselves wise and capable of applying scientific reasoning to every situation. Social scientist profess one type of dysfunctional family as one without a two parent household. Further, it is proposed that this atmosphere of dysfunctionalism will

result in a dysfunctional child. The scientific minded and worldly wise person has not taken into consideration all of the components which, can affect life. The power of the spiritual either is not considered or its affect considered minimal and therefore, irrelevant. Likewise, the church as monitor of the sacraments and rituals of worship for centuries often is not conversant on issues and their potential for faith growth opportunities. Many of the components of life are issues to be solved for the secular and for Christ those issues are components for life's solutions. Conflict can be the source of faith growth.

People are the embodiment of various types of conflict. Conflict of sibling rivalry; conflict of height and weight; conflict of attractiveness; conflict of racial acceptance; conflict of educable prowess and superiority verses inferiority are abundant in society. Unresolved, the personally recognized and unrecognized camouflaged conflict will react to situations often irresponsibly and illogically. Although, to identify the source of conflict is difficult, once identified and given the opportunity for resolution, the buy product for society is a "whole" human. Jesus repeatedly said to individuals that it is their faith which, makes them whole.

The statement "faith makes one whole" is not a scientifically logical statement. However, faith establishes a relationship. Mrs. Roberts, the young mother, pursued a continuously evolving relationship of faith which led to freedom from life's bruises. The community of faith at Grace, hyperbolically stepped out on a limb which challenged their beliefs and the role of the church. This leap of faith provided the opportunity to realize a new sense of freedom. The biblical reference to the relationship between faith and wholeness confounds the world yet, provides an identity for that considered weak in the

world.

In a society distinguishing an advantaged people from a disadvantaged people or nation creates an attitude in society for the development of injustice, a confused self identity and a misconception of others. Children in kindergarten recognize the child most favored by the teacher. The pre-school age child knows the one most favored by grandma. The understanding for this injustice is not perceived but it is recognized as an injustice.

A favored child performs a mental evaluation of his or her selfhood in comparison to others. As the favored person realizes the privileges of the favored position, a false sense of self is established, resulting in a distorted view of the value and worth of others. Negative personality traits develop which, convey this message in thought and action that everyone else is ordinary and the privileged person is special. Unjust laws are gradually being deleted which, have previously reflected that a European heritage is superior to an African heritage. Nevertheless, the law and the practice of a superior attitude has proven detrimental to the faith growth for both races and a stumbling stone for Christian harmony.

A distorted perception of self interferes with the acceptance of other cultures as equals. Individual's erroneous perceptions of their superiority or inferiority in relation to others is a distortion of the image of God and the grace of God. Israel had a distorted self image as a nation which passed from one generation to another. Any attempt to accept others as equals is clouded by a self perception as the privileged and special. In the work area, in the board room, on the bowling team, preconceived concepts of men about

women and vice versa are the cause for the breakdown in communication. Each gender has a preconceived or prejudicial concept of the opposite gender that dictates ones' attitude and behavior toward the opposite gender or person. The preconceived or prejudicial thoughts have established functional limits and boundaries of gender, race, mental ability, physical strength, emotional state, weaknesses and strengths in a given situation. Therefore, until self identities become Christ centered both parties relate to each other at a level of mistrust and communicate limited truths. Bruised and fragmented relationships are perpetuated by an imbalance of power to influence ones' destiny and exert control of others. One party has the power to enforce that another human can only be "who I allow you to be" rather than "who you are" and "who you can become in Christ." The opportunities of ministries for the church evolve free only with the removal of traditional attitudes that impede wholeness.

The tension between the races as well as the tension between genders has fertile ground in ignorance. Ignorance is the applicable term in order to convey an area absent of the combination of wisdom and knowledge. The church has to admit ignorance in areas which, often reach beyond its' traditional role. The conceptualization of Dr. W. Edward Deming's theory for total quality management can be summarized as a praxis based upon moving beyond preconceived ideas of people, toward building new relationships and accepting the gifts each one has to offer for the success of the whole. In a country as culturally diverse as the United States, new avenues for building and strengthening relationships among the races is necessary and required as a confirmation of continuous faith growth in communities.

Cultural diversity was witnessed and appreciated in the differences between the Indiana white teachers and the Tennessee black teachers. In a society of conflict between the black and white culture, an appreciation for both cultures places one seemingly, caught in the middle. White Americans marching with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or living the experiences with Mahatma Ghandi were people learning to appreciate God at a new level of freedom as they experienced their own spiritual release from bruises. As a result of this model individuals learn that in the middle with God is an opportunity for racial peace and self harmony.

One white Indiana first grade teacher, [redacted] had her preconceived idea of black people. Her concept was that all were dirty, lazy, had an odor, told lies and considered inappropriate company for any white child. She had two black students in her class, a female and a male. [redacted] did not take the advantage of the opportunity to move beyond her prejudices. Two black children who were very different people with different backgrounds, different strengths and weaknesses individually provided an opportunity for enhancing cultural appreciation. [redacted] was in a powerful position to be instrumental in initiating racial harmony instead, she chose to distinguish a privileged and an unprivileged relationship between the races in her class. Many of the Tennessee black teachers and family members, though sensitive of the struggle for black people in this country, taught Christian values, Christian ethics and attitudes for harmonious relationships.

Grace AME Church, characterized by a large biracial youth group and young adult community has the same opportunity as [redacted] to be instrumental in creating

Christian cultural harmony or instrumental in continuing an oppressed underprivileged class which, deny a people the right to identify with the image of God and to build a spiritual relationship with Jesus the Christ.

Biracial individuals are faced with the tension of negatives and positives from both races. Singular race children are faced with the tension of negatives and positives from both races as a result of the degree of melanin or other physical characteristics. The one similarity between the singular race child and the biracial child is the need and desire to embrace their culture. Culture is defined as the concepts, skills, habits, manners, emotions, art and institutions, not the degree of melanin. Parents of single race and biracial offspring are confronted with many of the same racial issues facing their children. The parents struggle is to develop a personal image that allows them and others freedom to live peacefully and harmoniously in communities.

This is a society of racially bruised people oppressors and the oppressed in need of journeying to higher levels of faith, trust in God and freedom to live in Christ as joint heirs with him. The role for the church is to own the reality that both cultures have played major roles in the development of identity, both negative and positive. Persons actively in pursuit of God become agents of conflict resolution, reconciling families and neighbors. God's agents convey a saving faith in the power of God's spirit to weave hope in communities of faith.

In accordance to the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, I John 4:15,16, "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God...God

is Love and he who abides in God abides in Love."[12] To love God and to live in God is to place ones' trust in God. The power accompanying love is the need to learn who a person is in their pain and their joy and to develop nurturing systems for that life enabling bonding beyond divisive faith communities. Christians must realize the umbilical cord of life which nurtured growth in faith in the lives of Abraham, Joseph, Obed, Mary, Joseph, Peter and Paul crosses gender and racial boundaries to nurture faith today.

God's word says the greatest gift is love, that is a love working toward the dissolution of the situation of people caught in the middle of racial conflict and providing avenues toward life in Christ.

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[12] 1 John 4:15,16 RSV

CHAPTER TWO

STATE OF THE ART

The Biracial community as an identified community in the United Sates is an new entity as a minority community. Previously, the biracial community has always been present and included in one of the parents culture's. Most African Americans can trace their genealogy to biracial great grandparents or grandparents. Alex Haley's book Roots demonstrates this fact as a part of African American history. Pre-Reconstruction and Reconstruction era of this country as stated in the context are reflective of an era of limited opportunities for the newly freed slave of African American heritage. Africa's descendants in the U.S. were bound to a style of life by the dominant power structure therefore, they were denied the freedom of choices. An African American whether in the north or south meant a continuous attempt to survive according to the laws delegated by the dominant power structure.

Today's world is encouraged to choose a direction for travel to work: the interstate or city streets, white bread or whole wheat, the hospital in the east, west, north, or south portion of the city. Employees complain about medical plans with predetermined physicians which, limit one's choice of doctors and medical care. Choices are limitless even as to where one can live. People choose to live outside the United

exist in the past. Each individual can choose to reside on this continent, in this nation, in a particular state, and in a city that is a metropolitan area or rural community. A person can choose to live in the suburbs and simultaneously enjoy the symphony and art museum of the city. These are choices related to ones economic ability.

In a society giving itself the freedom to choose in areas of less significance than ones' identity, the biracial community is facing an issue relevant to their identity. They too are exercising their right of choice. Jealousy can only see the possibility of potential for acquisitions which other segments have or that a segment of society might covet. In the minds of worldly wisdom, identity is connected to wealth and position. However, identity is an element fundamental to spiritual growth. Biblical morality has taught to deny rights is to be oppressive.

The issue of identity conflict has been discovered as an element unresolved and a decision forced upon individuals by the dominant culture in the American society. Few have chosen their race. In Lisa Funderburg's book, Black, White, Other: Biracial Americans Talk About Race and Identity, autobiographical accounts of life as Biracial are recorded. Carol Calhoun, at 54 years of age and a high school teacher in the state of Georgia, shares her identity. There were some struggles and many unresolved issues. However, she has achieved a comfort zone due to her rearing as an adopted child.

> Although raised by a white mother until she was eight, she was then then adopted by a black family. "This is the way I was brought up and this is where I'm comfortable. Had I stayed with my biological mother."[1]

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[1]Lisa Funderburg, Black , White, Other: Biracial Americans Talk About Race and Identity (New York: Quill, 1994), 186.

Another accounts is the autobiography of Jacqueline Djanikian whose father is Armenian born in Valence in southern France and her mother is African American and born in San Antonio, Texas. Jacqueline relays her account of racial tension internally and externally. Her method of dealing with the tension was confrontational. She chose to confront the cultural difference at school where her community was diverse.

> I never really interacted with any other black women or guys except for my mom and my mom's family. An so to fit in and to really understand other people's background...I had to really adjust myself and learn how to interact with all of these different cultures.[2]

Funderburg, a biracial person, discovered from the National Center of Health birth rates by race. The birth rate of children to one black and one white parent has increased in the last several years.

> 1991, 52,232 such births were recorded, compared with
> 1981 26,968, and in...
> 1968 8,758
> From 1968 to 1991 the total for these births is 616,850[3]

Funderburg's research focussed upon a witness of the number of biracial births and the number of persons coping with identity, some successful others not as successful.

Andrew Sung Park, Theology professor at United Theological Seminary, recognizes the need for a focus and a mission. Interactions among persons culturally different without a central focus in Christ has led to actions detrimental for biracial families. In reading Racial Conflict and Healing: An Asian American Perspective, a

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[2]Ibid. 309

[3]Ibid. 11

concise message is to focus upon the parousia, the second coming of Christ. "When we have a healthy vision of the parousia, we can see the right direction for our mission in the world."[4] Mission for the church determines its effectiveness for the community in which the church exist.

Dr. Park does engage the subject of mission and how the church identifies itself. That focus is related to the parousia as stated. A focus on the parousia could prove ambiguous as a determiner of mission. One perspective is the depth of understanding for a a new convert. A focus upon the parousia can be accomplished however, the immediacy of life crisis as experienced by the new convert has precedence. The new convert may be unfamiliar with faith life expectancies other than that Jesus saved them from an addiction and loves them. Those in the church and students of Christian education are mature Christians will appreciate mission in preparation for the second coming. However in the absence of biblical knowledge, self-interest can invoke ministry.

During the August Intensive Seminars for the Doctoral Program at United Theological Seminary, Dr. Marsha Foster Boyd presented a lecture on "Social Justice in a Technological Age." The presentation addressed the concept of self-help. "Self help is equal to self determination, sufficiency and uplift."[5] The concept of self-help has been the model for support groups as an aid in confirming ones' identity and social problems. The nationally known Alcoholics Anonymous programs are developed on a self-help concept.

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[4]Andrew Sung Park, Racial Conflict and Healing: An Asian-American Theological Perspective (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 67.

[5]Marsha Foster Boyd, "Social Justice in a Technological Age", United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, 8 August 1997.

This model of ministry goes beyond the limitations of self-help. Life experiences provide a singular vision perspective. As previously mentioned for the church to survive it must have a mission. That mission's effectiveness depends upon a source of strength beyond the limited experiences and self-focus of the associates. The video documentary," Skin Deep" was based upon the self-help model. Dialogue reached the level of a " what we as a people need from you" attitude and the progress ended at that point. This model extends the individual mission beyond a human needs by other humans response.

Harold Dalton's Racial Healing: Confronting the Fear Between Blacks and Whites, at different places is polemic on the issue of the "what I need you to know about me" in reference to whites about blacks and vice versa. One chapter is dedicated to and entitled, "White Skin Privilege"[6] and provides a prescription for what each must do for racial healing. This a prescription and just as any prescription unless one believes oneself ill will not ingest the medicine. The theology of the model recognizes the fundamental need of an individual transformation which causes restoration to the ultimate will of God.

" Never before had I thought of myself as a "half-breed." Gregory Howard Williams, Life On the Color Line: The True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He Was Black," [7]is the most thought provoking and challenging work on some of the conflicting issues facing persons in the biracial community. Williams book conveys that the church did not offer assistance during his early struggle. As the church preparing to

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[6]Harold L. Dalton, Racial Healing: Confronting the Fear Between Blacks and Whites (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 105.

[7]Gregory Howard Williams, Life On the Color Line: The True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He Was Black (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 38.

enter the twenty-first century the church needs an answer.

Cain Hope Felder 's Troubling Biblical Waters, challenges the issue of identity for the African American by identifying persons in the Bible of African heritage. Also, his work identifies characteristics and positions held by persons of African descent who can be categorized among the nations leaders as mentors and role models. His chapter eight is inspirational for the black woman and woman minister. His work address crisis issues faced daily by minorities. This is only one method of identity which, is to identify models similar to oneself in ones' book of faith.

The issue of color prejudice is analyzed and evaluated in the works of Frank M. Snowden, Jr., Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks. Snowden's research reviews the art and culture. His work reveals the beauty conveyed to the world through art and artifacts on individuals of African heritage. Further, his work addresses ancient references to the beauty of a black person. Though slavery was prevalent during the ancient days of Greek dominance, one did not become a slave based upon race.

> The ancients did accept the institution of slavery as a fact of life; they made ethnocentric judgements of other societies; they had narcissistic canons of physical beauty; the Egyptians distinguished between themselves, "the people," and outsiders; and the Greeks called foreign cultures barbarian. Yet nothing comparable to the virulent color prejudice of modern times.."[8]

The value of his contribution is that the dark complexion has not always been perceived as negative.

Jefferson D. Edwards, Jr. has written Purging Racism from Christianity: Freedom

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[8]Snowden, Frank M. Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 63.

and Purpose Through Identity. Edwards addresses identity concerns by conveying that the characteristics of person of African heritage are beautiful to God. Yet in an effort to trace biblical roots he states "We got lost in the translations in the Dark Ages...the final separation from history was through slavery."[9] He attacks the white value system for attributing beauty only to Euro-Centric characteristics. He determined that the means of challenging white determination that black is valueless is to identify Black's in the Bible. He says that this same means of determining must be applied whether the issue is race or gender.

The works of each author has played a major role in determining some of the issues to be addressed. Too, their work has been beneficial for knowing what has been effective and whether lives were transformed.

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[9]Edwards, Jefferson D. Purging Racism from Christianity: Freedom and Purpose Through Identity (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 60-61.

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

FREE TO LIVE

INTRODUCTION

A still life art work displays salvation in a cyclical pattern beginning with a void space and an oval atlas tilted on its' axis. This part of the scene is to convey God as the divine creator of the world. The second scene conveys the intervention of sin in the life of humankind depicted by a fruit and a cloth draped human figure. God's messengers are revealing the coming of a messiah who would be the source of light and wisdom in the world. The third scene is the nativity scene announcing and proclaiming the birth of the Savior. The message to the viewer is that He has been given the authority to take away the sins of the world. The fourth scene is an arrangement of thorns in the middle of which, is a cross formed by two large nails conveying Jesus, as the sacrifice, the atonement for sin. The message is that the Savior died and rose from the dead to confirm his salvation power and authority to the world. The fifth scene is a white dove in a downward flowing position. The motion of the dove is to convey the continuous work of the Holy Spirit in

bringing souls to a saving faith in Jesus the Christ. This saving faith places each believing person in a right relationship with God. The sixth scene is an architectural structure historically considered a church which, suggest to all who enter that they have the opportunity to become the church but that they are not yet complete. The implication is that the church is more than a building, it is unique in that once one becomes the church a spiritual power is present transforming ones character. The final scene is a circular stand with one tall white candle in the middle and four candles connected to the stand. This is the advent wreath. This is a reminder that Christ is coming again for those who love the Lord and the Lord's people and endure in that love for the Lord until the end.

Each scene depicts the ultimate and divine love of God for the world. The entire art work conveys God's divine master plan which is so designed that individuals might come into a right relationship with God. The art displaying the work of the trinity and the church in the world is the essence of this theological statement. A dual thesis is woven throughout this statement. The contention of the author is that an abundant life is available only through freedom and freedom exists by faith in Christ who provides power to live. This co-dependent thesis conveys the pivotal message found throughout the Bible. God's message is freedom from the bondage of sin is acquired through faith in Jesus the Christ and that freedom is available to all. In order for humankind to live free which, is to possess joy, peace, blessedness, and the bountiful life, one must access freedom. This freedom not only means that one is no longer controlled by the ultimate wages of sin which, is death. Rather it is a freedom that empowers one to possess the boldness and conviction to equip those yet caught in bondage with the means by which they too, can be

free to live. Jesus is the means to freedom. Freedom is the bountiful life. For Christ the pure sacrifice purchased it for all who would desire access to the bountiful life. A new life in Christ is indicative of service to the ultimate will and purpose of God.

> He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.[1]
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> Heb 9:12-14

This same dual thesis is the substantiation of the theological foundation for the project developing out of the current context.

The context described earlier in this document states the worshiping community is composed of two traditional races, African American and European American. The heritage of these two nations is a long standing history of cultural conflict. Nevertheless, a sizable percentage of children with a combined heritage as a result of the union of African and European American people worship at Grace. Even though the worshiping population have the knowledge of God as the creator, Jesus as Son of God and Savior of the world, and have an understanding that the Holy Spirit will draw them into a closer relationship with God yet, are struggling for the benefits of total freedom.

Many who have entered the church and placed their names on the church roll are not completely the church. These individuals have a presence of mind to celebrate the ritual of advent by the reading the Bible, attending worship, and placing their names on the

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[1]Heb 9:12-14

church roll. Yet a struggle exist in striving to access the freedom offered by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The art work as described in the opening acknowledges the seasonally, determined worship celebrated by the church community. Yet, the prejudicial attitudes of persons who profess a love of God and a desire to be the redeemed church are incongruous with divine unselfish love that God requires of God's people. An ambiguous life style is present. Public proclamation of love for God flourishes simultaneously with ethnic origin prejudices. Our biracial children experience that incongruity from parents, grandparents, relatives and family friends many of whom consider themselves the church.

The ultimate goal in this theological statement is to answer the question asked of the writer of this project by an adult biracial individual, "And what does God and the church of Jesus the Christ have to say to me?" A necessary preliminary to answering this question is to delineate the writers perspective and understanding of God, Jesus, The Holy Spirit and the church. Specific biblical references undergird the theological position of this paper to provoke a more consistent proclamation and praxis. As these texts are visited, the reader will follow the development and growth of a Bible and experience based faith that will culminate in the biblical foundation and justification for this project.

The Supreme Being

This author's premise of God as the supreme being is to denote an all-powerful, limitless, absolute, perfect, beyond parable, immeasurable, creator who sustains the universe. These descriptive phrases of God acknowledge God as one beyond the control

of scientific principles and human limitations. The adjectives to describe God are not applicable to the characteristics of human beings therefore, a concluding truth is that God is Spirit.

God is supernatural, without body or form even though spoken of anthropomorphically. An example of anthropomorphic language is recorded in the old testament book of the Bible, Isaiah 65:2-5, God's hands and nose. Nevertheless, in an effort to describe God the writer realizes that God's attributes can be divided into two categories, communicable and incommunicable. The use of the term attributes is not an attempt to assign characteristics or qualities to God. Rather, it is an endeavor to describe God as possessor of attributes and to denote characteristics and qualities of God identified through biblical revelations and the experiences of humankind.

The incommunicable attributes of God are characteristics not attributable to human beings. Isaiah's creative use of anthropomorphism in Isaiah 40:12, distinctly convey an incommunicable attribute of God by reference to God as the one:

> Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in balance?[2]
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> Isaiah 40:12 RSV

The Isaiah passage speaks anthropomorphically of the omnipotent power of God. As this incommunicable attribute of omnipotence is characteristic of God only, the same applies to other incommunicable attributes.

Yet, to speak of the patience, long suffering, mercy and love of God is to be

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[2]Is 40:12 RSV

cognizant of the human ability to possess these attributes. Those attributes that humans can possess though, in their less than perfect degree are the communicable attributes of God. In the epistles to the church at Corinth, Ephesis and Galatia, persons are encouraged to exemplify communicable attributes of God such as longsuffering, patience, and love. The definition of the two terms communicable and incommunicable are necessary as the foundation of faith is described.

Though individuals can not see God, God's presence is experienced and provides a non-visual description of God's attributes. Recorded in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible are numerous accounts of Adam and Eve's communication with God in the Garden of Eden. The recorded dialogue confirms that God is knowledgeable of their location however, they are only aware of the presence of God. On Mount Horeb on read of a theophany of God speaking to Moses out of a burning bush which, reveals Moses experience of the presence of God. Likewise, the minor prophets in the old testament relate their experiences of speaking with God but none has seen God. In the new testament, Jesus says that only he has seen God. These are only a few recorded Biblical accounts of human experiences of the presence of God.

Although neither man nor woman has seen God, the personal experiences of God's presence, accompanied by biblical knowledge of God teaches the reverence of God. The phrase reverence of God is to convey more than the dictionary definition of feeling or an attitude of deep respect. Unfeigned reverence of God is the derivative of the acknowledgment and appreciation of God's attributes, both incommunicable and communicable.

Psalm 115 as well as Psalm 89 are motivational to encourage trust in God. The term trust means action. Trust is a confident expectation, faith, reliance or the act of having confidence. An individual's capability to trust is seldom extended without caution. Trust is a very protected element of our communication with others. Trust is gradually extended and not to all people and situations. Seldom will a person extend themselves to develop a trust relationship with a person they can see and apprehension is increased with one whom they can not see. God can not be seen therefore, humankind will rely upon the visible. Yet, the psalmist encourages trust in God. Encouragement to trust God has supportive scriptural justification .

Psalm 89 says that God is faithful and God's faithfulness is wisdom to all generations. However, the term faith is carelessly incorporated in the dialogue of twentieth century citizens and used most often in references such as "faith in people" and "faith in inanimate things." This misuse is so excessive until the mention of faith in God provokes caution and apprehension. The psalmist's admonition is that humankind should understand that God keeps God's promises unlike many of the people. An inanimate object should never be attributed with faith worthiness. In that God is might and God has power over the sea, the earth and all that exist nothing can inhibit God in fulfilling God's promises.

The 115th Psalm provides another reason that humans should trust God. Reading this psalm through the eyes of wisdom, moves understanding from a general revelation and a general reason to trust God to a specific justification for trust in God. Palm 115 confirms that God has power to fulfill a promise. If humankind will allow themselves to

trust, then one becomes cognizant of God as the greatest help and the most powerful shield. It is often that shield which, provides the faith necessary in order to live an according to God's will and attain the abundant life.

In the 115th Psalm, shield is a metaphor, portraying a visual reason as to why one should trust God. Historically, the shield was made of a material to deflect weapons of war such as an arrow, a spear or a sharp piercing type object. A warrior readying himself for battle made the shield of strong material, often red in color and anointed, therefore a certain trust was present as the warrior carried the shield into battle. Also, Psalm 84:11 refers to God as shield, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield".[3] Any attempt to endure the circumstances of life without the shield have the potential of causing damage to ones character, seemingly irreparably.

One can be certain of God's faithfulness to fulfill God's promises is the shield behind which one stands when trusting God. According to the new testament, the shield is synonymous with Christian faith. Biblical wisdom as revealed in the old testament and the new testament teaches individuals to pursue a trust relationship with God. The attributes of God which, encourage trust are confirmed by the Psalmist in the conveyance of the message that God has no boundaries or limit to God's possibilities.

Over the thousands of years that humankind have communicated with God, names have been assigned to God based upon human experiences. These assigned names were and continue to be demonstrative of attributes beyond the capability and identity of humans. A list of the names with the paraphrased definition that have referred to God

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[3]Ps 84:11

from one generation to another are as follows: Shaddai and 'EL-Shaddai,[4] God is all powerful; Elyon[5] means high and exalted above all others; Elohim[6] means the only strong and mighty One. Each name communicates attributes of God that are not attributes of any created being. Even if one desired these attributes, they are not accessible. In that humans cannot possess such attributes in the perfection of the attributes, then it is appropriate to refer back to the psalmist who says, then trust and faith should be invested in one with these incommunicable attributes.

The names confirm that certain attributes of God are incommunicable such as the attribute "absolute". God as absolute says that God is total freedom, not limited nor restrained and self-existent. More clearly stated, God is self-sufficient and God's existence is independent of any other thing or being.

God as self-sufficient says that God is self-originated therefore, not originated in the mind of humankind. The incommunicable attribute of self-sufficiency communicates that God is independent. God is autonomous even in God's works. God's ultimate and divine plan operates unconstrained of a dependancy upon the works of humankind. This self-sufficient and independent God has purpose for the world and the people in it and blessings to bestow. The Bible communicates the message of God's purpose and

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[4]Andrew Jukes, The Names of God: Discovering God as He Desires to be Known (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1967; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996) 83 (page reference (s) are to reprint edition).

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid

promises in varying " literary forms (Gattungen), varying *sitz en laben"*[7] (situation in life), and spoken through various characters both provide means of understanding God's relationship to all humans. Some of the messengers were professional fishermen, tax collectors and shepherds yet, the message is consistent. The God of yesterday is the same today and continues to be the same in years to come. God promises to those who trust and have faith in Christ, shall experience the blessedness of this life and inherit eternal life. This life and freedom is available to those who trust. Trust is an acquiescence to follow God's requirement for the more excellent life. Herein lies the old and the new message of God in God's revelation of God's self.

Another incommunicable attribute encourages one to place trust in God, that is the immutability of God. Immutability is not to be confused with immobile. The Bible reveals that God is often referred to as" *actus purus*, which says that God is always in action."[8] This action God is immutable and never changing in God's ultimate divine purpose which is that all should be saved.

Individuals require different motivational techniques in order to cause them to respond in a positive manner to situations which occur in life. God relates to individuals as individuals meaning in relation to each ones' specific needs. For instance, in relating to

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[7]A. A. Anderson, New Century Bible Commentary: Based on the Revised Standard Version The Book of Psalms Vol. 1, (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott Publ. LTD., 1972; reprint, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1989), 32 (page reference is to reprint edition).

[8]Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.1941 reprint, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 58 (page reference is to reprint edition).

Jonah, God's persistence was required. Jonah made his own choices however, through the demonstration of divine power, God eliminated the broad spectrum of choices in Jonah's life. It can be said that God's actions to encourage Jonah were drastic whereas, God's encouragement toward Joshua, can be considered less drastic. Joshua demonstrated less resistance and was obedient to the word of God. However, in both situations God's purpose and ultimate motive is the same, to move an individual from a lesser to a greater level of faith. Growth in faith is necessary for "faith-full" living. Faithful life is the abundant life and some shall come to that life by encouragement, others through chastisement and some shall never claim that possession. Nevertheless, it is the immutablily of God that communicates to the individual the desire to live saved and possess the abundance of life which, is freedom.

Another incommunicable attribute with the message to stimulate trust in God is God's infinity and immensity. An infinite and immense God is not bound by time, space or knowledge. God is the creator of time and has clearly proven God's limitless presence from generation to generation. Fifty million people in varying parts of the world can begin a prayer at the same time each in a different language and in disparate situations yet, an infinite and immense God does hear each word and never misses an emotion or mind set of each praying person. An infinite God sees every second of each persons tomorrow and desires to lead each one in the path of righteousness that is the path of right choices in building a continuously growing faith.

The faith and trust required by God will lead to building binding and loving relationships among humankind. The God that one is encouraged to trust is in the

processes of teaching humankind to build faith communities. I John 4:20 conveys the wisdom of God concerning love;

> If any one says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother and sister whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he or she has not seen,[9]
>
> I John 4:20 RSV

"*Unitas singularitatis* and *unitas simplicitatis*, the unity of God is another incommunicable attribute of God."[10] The psalmist encourages trust in God because there is but one Divine Being. God is not separated into parts, as is confirmed in Deuteronomy 6:4, "...Jehovah our God is one Jehovah"[11]. Jehovah denotes the self-existence of God. Likewise, the attribute, self-existent confirms that the three persons in the Godhead are not separate parts of God's essence. God's fundamental nature is not separate from God's perfection experienced in the three persons of the Godhead. Rather, God is perfect and the absolute of the properties light, love, good, truth and wisdom.

In concurrence with the psalms and numerous new testament passages, the message to biracial persons is to trust in God, for God is your help and shield. The attributes of God communicate trust, for every human dilemma has a solution even for the member of two conflicting cultures. The most valuable commodity of that communication is the revelation of God which authenticates the psalmist petition to place

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[9]I Jn 4:20 RSV

[10]Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.1941 reprint, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 61 (page reference is to reprint edition).

[11]Dt 6:4 RSV

trust in God. It is important to remember in applying the communicable attributes to our lives that prayer communication is not the end, it is the process which is a reminder of the might, power and independency of God to be instrumental to God's purpose in the world.

God's ultimate will is for God's people to be free. A reminder of the ultimate will of God as recorded in the gospel of St. John:

> For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.[12]
>
> John 3:16 RSV

God has made a commitment and conquered the greatest fear of humankind which is the fear of a condemned life and a condemned eternity. God is not the father of fear, jealousy, malice, or hate. Rather, God provides the path to freedom from the bondage of those sins.

Each individual has a right to freedom from fear, jealousy, envy, malice covetousness and evil desire. One is reminded that God told Abraham even before Abraham had one child, that Abraham would have descendants held captive; they would be aliens in a foreign land of people who would enslave them cruelly for four hundred years. God freed the Israelites from bondage and provided nutrients sufficient to live. Any situation which enslaves a person physically or mentally affects the spiritual freedom to worship the Lord. Acts 7:7 provides further support for the position that God has an intolerance for enslavement which impedes rather than provoke one to worship. God says, "But I will judge the nation which they serve...and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place,"[13] Acts 7:7. The enslaved mind and spirit to sin are not free to

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[12]Jn 3:16 RSV

[13]Acts 7:7

worship and serve God with heart, mind and soul. Then the obvious result of the interference with worship commands the judgement of God. Reflecting upon God's deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, freedom was accomplished in response to God's might, power and self-sufficiency to orchestrate deliverance according to God's divine will. Those at enmity with the will of God experienced then and individuals today continue to experience the wrath of God. Biblical accounts confirm God as the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow and one who continues to intervene in the lives of those who are bruised and in bondage today, whether that bondage is physical or spiritual. Divine intervention provides a freedom to rise above circumstances to a saving faith in Jesus the Christ.

Exploring further into God and God's plan of salvation, one becomes aware of the essence of God as trinity; Father or Creator, Son of Man-Jesus the Christ, and Holy Ghost. The trinity of God communicates to humankind in all of God's essence. The purposeful reflection upon the essence of God declares attributes of God which are communicable and can be witnessed in Jesus the Christ.

Some Communicable Attributes of God

A sensitivity to God's communicable attributes is needed as individuals are in the process of a continuously evolving identification of themselves. Some prerequisites are essential to understand the role of communicable attributes in the lives of individuals.

It is necessary to have a working definition of the term communicable. As previoiusly stated the communicable attributes of God are conveyed by Jesus exist in

humankind only in an imperfect state. Clearly stated, communicable attributes are those attributes that can be transferred to individuals. Due to the presence of human sin, communicable attributes are present in humans in an imperfect state. Therefore, the concern is to identity those transferrable attributes necessary for persons to build harmonious relationships in a global community.

Self actualization is enhanced by an understanding that communicable attributes are subdivided into the following categories: the spirituality of God; intellectual attributes; moral attributes; the sovereignty of God.

The attribute, spirituality is a reminder that God is spirit. As previously stated, God is not experienced by the five senses. Often individuals refer to the hand of God, or the breast of God just as the Bible has referred to God however, the message of the Bible continues to be that God is spirit. These anthropomorphisms only convey God's power, strength and ability to provide comfort in terms familiar to individuals. Each person has a spirit. It is clearly stated that God places God's spirit in humans. That spirit from God within each one responds to the work of God's spirit. The yielding of one's will to the Spirit increases individual understanding of the gifts that God has bestowed for the edification of humankind and to glorify God. According to in the book of Proverbs 20:27, "The spirit of man is a lamp of the Lord."[14] Individual spiritual understanding is further enhanced through such passages as:

> What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him," God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what

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[14]Prv 20:27 RSV

> person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him? Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit.
>
> I Corinthians 2: 9-13 RSV

God is intellect which, communicates that God is judgement and reason. God is the highest and the only perfect intellect. In that God is the pinnacle of intellect, wisdom which is defined as judging rightly and following the soundest course of action comes from God. God's knowledge, wisdom and veracity, meaning truth and faithfulness is without comparison. Human knowledge has its source in God. Wisdom comes only from God, likewise truth and faithfulness are acquired and developed under the guidance of the Spirit of God. Therefore, one race, or nation of people can not claim genetic superiority in knowledge, wisdom or veracity over another group of people. To be sure, intellect is granted by grace, the unmerited favor of God. Likewise, wisdom from God is the only true wisdom for the wisdom of the world is foolishness to God, according to I Corinthians 3:19. Wisdom of God is further expressed in the epistle to the Corinthians in the second chapter and the book of James in the third chapter.

> Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God which God decreed before the ages for our glorification.[15]
>
> I Corinthians 2:6,7 RSV

> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish.

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[15]I Cor 2:6-7 RSV

> For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.[16]
>
> James 3:14-17 RSV

God is moral which denotes honorable, ethical and principled . This category is subdivided into goodness and holiness. God is good which, is good at the stage of perfection. Recorded in the gospel of St. Luke, a rich ruler called Jesus, good. Jesus responded by saying in Luke 18:19 "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone".[17] Humankind is to strive for ultimate good in their relations toward one another because, good is the product of love. Love and grace are products of God's goodness.

Ought not those called after the name of Christ to strive toward perfect good? As God grants grace to humankind, likewise, we are to extend grace to one another. Mercy and longsuffering are products of goodness. Petitions to God for God's mercy and longsuffering should be accompanied by individuals granting mercy and being longsuffering toward others, individually and collectively. A clear example of a situation in need of mercy and longsuffering occurs when one condemns an entire race or group by a perception. If each person can remember that only God is Holy and worthy of reverence then, no one person or group will elevate themselves above others to be reverenced nor could one group be encourage to look upon another group with degradation.

God in the flesh, rather Jesus, demonstrates for humankind, how to live acording to the will of God cognizant of the communicable attributes. The life of Jesus is a guide to

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[16]Jas 3:14-17 RSV

[17]Lk 18:19

a growing relationship with God in response to ones' striving toward perfection in God's incommunicable attributes.

A Saving Faith in Jesus the Christ

Jesus, biblically referred to as the word, the rock, present in the beginning, the only begotten Son of God, the only virgin birth, conceived by the Holy Spirit, the Messiah, the Redeemer, the propitiation for sin, went through death on the cross, was buried and arose the third day, after death and the resurrection appeared before apostles and disciples, and ascended into heaven. He is the Christ.

Jesus is God incarnate fulfilling God's ultimate and divine purpose for humankind. Jesus' ministry and purpose can be divided into four areas: The entrance of the Messiah into the world; The perfect demonstration of the application of the communicable attributes; to usher in the kingdom; The fulfillment of the salvation plan, the propitiation for sin; The announcement of the second coming.

Isaiah speaks of one to come who will "feed his flock like a shepherd". [18] Further, he speaks of a Savior, a Redeemer the Holy One. Jesus' birth and the events surrounding that birth confirms that he is the one whom the major and minor prophets have spoken. God has put on flesh for the salvation of all people: Black, White, Biracial, Indian, Korean, without discrimination by race or cultural identity.

In reflecting upon the communicable attributes of God, Jesus' life demonstrates how God intends for humankind to incorporate communicable attributes into ones' life

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[18]Is 40:11 RSV

conducive to creating harmony, peace, and wholeness as one body through an unceasing prayer life. According to the gospel of John 14:6, Jesus says, " I am the way, and the truth, and the life no one comes to the Father, but by me".[19] This statement implies for one to experience excellent life, to access knowledge and wisdom, to relate in goodness one to another and to live eternity with the Father, Jesus is the key who unlocks the mystery of how to fulfill God's purpose for person's lives.

By example Jesus teaches appropriate worship of God. The Bible states that Jesus prayed all night before selecting the twelve apostles. This example illustrates the lesson to be learned from prayer as vital for life which is a three tier lesson: prayer as honor to God; prayer as communication with God; and prayer as a necessity for decision making. Numerous accounts refer to times when Jesus separated himself from his closest companions to communicate in solitude with God. Even during the crucifixion, Jesus continues to pay reverence to the Father through prayer.

Jesus' encounters with the scribes and elders illustrate a dichotomy between divine wisdom and knowledge and worldly knowledge. The world wise challenged Jesus' inappropriate adherence to the Sabbath Day. Jesus responded with a challenge of their wisdom in understanding of the temple grain and the selling of concessions in the temple. Scribes and Pharisees speak of God but do not know God, neither are their ways encouragement for others to follow God. Even Nicodemus, a very scholarly Pharisee, exemplary of excessive training and knowledge did not have understanding until spiritual wisdom was present. As Nicodemus applied worldly knowledge, he could not understand

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[19]Jn 14:6 RSV

the meaning of Jesus' words. In the New Testament book Romans 8:6, it is clearly stated, "To set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace".[20] Also, in I Corinthians 2:16 is the following statement concerning the mind, "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."[21] Without Jesus the Christ, human knowledge and wisdom is a vain attempt to live according to the purpose and will of God. The previous text ascribes to wisdom as the mind which has its existence in the spirit of Christ. What are humans to question God's reasoning and purposes.

As Jesus dialogued with the Samaritan woman at the well, his apostles could not understand his actions. One can surmise that they were not operating in the spirit of love and compassion. Samaritans, according to the historian Josephus, were originally from Persia and Media and were designated Cutheans. A further description is provided by II Kings 17:24-34, that says," King of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria'[22] rather, they are a people of mixed races. Too, these people now designated Samaritans worshiped idle gods and did not fear the Lord. Therefore, the apostles were perplexed by Jesus' actions in sharing the gospel with people who had acquired their name only because of the land in which they resided due to their mixed cultural heritage.

A humanly valueless wisdom controlled the minds of the apostles as fear gripped

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[20]Rom 8:6 RSV

[21]I Cor 2:16 RSV

[22]Is 17:24 RSV

their minds while on a ship with Jesus during a storm. The gospel writers of Matthew, Mark and Luke record this account when Jesus calms the sea in response to the apostles' fear which, was based upon worldly knowledge and wisdom. Their limited ability by scientific knowledge taught them that the force and power of the water to overcome their sailing vessel would certainly cause them to drawn. Fear provoked a concern as to the power of Jesus when he was sleeping verses when he was awake. The Christian's struggle is always, when to turn away from worldly insight to seek the wisdom of the Lord in all circumstances.

God's communicable attribute, "moral" is consistently exemplified in the life of Jesus. Even though Jesus provides the witness of moral actions required by God, the application; love, goodness, grace, mercy, and longsuffering are the stumbling stones for most humans who identify themselves as Christians. Even the term good is misused in relation to human behavior in comparison to "good" in relation to God. According to the Matthew 19:17, in the dialogue between Jesus and the rich young man, he referred to Jesus as good and Jesus questioned his judgement. The young man judged Jesus as good based upon what he had seen and heard, but Jesus was aware of the subjective nature of the young man's response. Good as an act void of personal gratification is a limited quality in humans yet, it can be developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In the gospel of Luke, recorded is a lesson taught by Jesus demonstrating kindness, neighborliness, good, grace and mercy. The hero was of a race of people rejected, a Samaritan. Yet, it was the Samaritan who gave of his possessions because he had compassion on the condition of another. His goodness was without consideration for any

reciprocal favor or a need for someone to think highly of him. Jesus' life taught love and compassion for all people. Good exists only when an action is without a reciprocal motive, as previously stated. Love of neighbor is helping, communicating and reaching to a neighbor as an extension of one's moral attribute in response to God's love.

The greatest manifestation of love is Jesus' choice in God's will to lay down or give his life that others might have the right to the abundant and eternal life. Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of humankind providing the opportunity for all to be saved. Humans exist in a state of sin which separates them from unity with God. The text according to Isaiah 53:10 describes God's mercy upon humankind by designating the sin offering for humankind:

> Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes himself an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.[23]
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> Isaiah 53:10 RSV

God provides the means by which individuals can be reconciled to a right relationship with God through the ultimate offering of Jesus the only begotten Son. In this respect, Jesus bequeathed to his followers the responsibility of carrying the message of reconciliation. It is a message to the bruised, the blind, the lame, and the afflicted either by the social, economic, and physical injustices of this life, Jesus has bequeathed to those called by his name the command to love and to seek healing for those with a broken spirit.

The greatest love is to give ones life that others might know the good news of Jesus the Christ. God's communicable attributes as exemplified in the life of Jesus,

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[23]Is 53:10 RSV

demonstrating grace and truth, becomes the means by which to lead the lost to a saving faith in Christ. Each one has a responsibility to carry the knowledge of saving faith to the world for the glory of God without regard for race, culture, national heritage or gender.

Saving faith in the Christ empowers one to access life in the kingdom. Jesus said in Matthew 4:17, and again in Matthew 10:7, "The kingdom is at hand".[24] Jesus reemphasizes the point of the kingdom in Matthew 12:28 when he cast out demons by saying , "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."[25] In that the kingdom is at hand and accessible based upon ones faith, greater is the responsibility of those in possession of that wisdom to share the message without discrimination and in love.

However, vital to the message of the Savior is the message of eschatology and should never be viewed as secondary in the message of salvation. Jesus the Christ is coming again for those who endure in faith. In Christ there is eternal life in the presence of God which is the ultimate reward. Therefore, the undying message of faith is to endure until the end. The epistle to the church at Rome is encouragement to all who are the church for generations:

> Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

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[24]Mt 4:17, 10:7 RSV

[25]Mt 12:28 RSV

Christ Jesus our Lord.[26]

Romans 8:37-39 KJV

The Work of the Holy Ghost

Jesus said that he would pray that the Father give for comfort another, who would be the spirit of truth, the Counselor . According the King James version of the Bible, Jesus as quoted in Saint John 14:26, conveys to the disciples that they would not be left to endure alone:

> But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.[27]
>
> John 14:26 KJV

The Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Living God, the Comforter.

It is important to realize that the work of the Holy Spirit was operative in the lives of individuals prior to the witness of the descent in his fullness at the time of Pentecost. A major function of the Holy Ghost is to evoke an awareness and an acceptance of saving faith in the Lord. In that two antithetical powers exist in the world, persons professing a saving faith in the Lord must have access to a power source in order to persevere in their faith. Perseverance entails maintaining and nurturing loving relationships with others, which requires the development of a right decorum in communal existence in addition to building a stronger relationship with God. The work of the spirit is demonstrated in the lives of believers to provide power for resistance in temptation and encouragement in

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[26]Rom 8:37-39 KJV

[27]Jn 14:26 KJV

weakness; to provide intercessory supplication; to develop and direct talents, gifts and abilities; to enhance the knowledge of one body in Christ by the witness of the indwelling spirit; and to lead one to maturity of faith in the wisdom of God.

The biblical accounts of the apostle Peter's life provides many human like, this world responses to God and are therefore, suitable for exhortation. In the book, Acts of the apostles, in an attempt to resist the Holy Spirit by Peter conveys some of the major functions of the Holy Spirit. Peter, who was Jewish, encountered his own prejudicial dilemma of relating to Greek or Hellenist. The wisdom of God was revealed in a vision by the Holy Ghost which brought Peter to a confrontation with his prejudice.

> And there came a voice to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "No, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean," And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has cleansed, you must not call common."...And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him,[28]
>
> Acts 10:13-15 RSV

> And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold three men are looking for you. Rise and go down, and accompany them without hesitation; for I have sent them."[29]
>
> Acts 19-20 RSV

The Holy Ghost spoke to Peter, guided him, brought him to a greater understanding of God, and united him in faith by the witness of the spirit. God ordered Peter's life to prepare Peter to love a people of another race and be prepared to follow the great command of Jesus. That command is to baptize all nations.

Peter viewed the Greeks as an unclean people but the Holy Ghost spoke to Peter

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[28]Acts 10:13-15 RSV

[29]Acts 10:19-20 RSV

and led him to Ceasarea and to baptize Greeks. Peter's compliance to the will of God in following the counsel of the Holy Ghost, allowed him the opportunity to witness the Holy Ghost fall upon the Greeks. As previously stated these were people not of Peter's race yet, they were people in Christ therefore members of the body of Christ.

Peter is quoted as saying:

> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, "John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy spirit." If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?[30]
>
> Acts 11:16 RSV

The Holy Ghost is instrumental in providing power, authority and wisdom for those called to perform and play a major role in God's purpose. One only need to consider the impact of the Holy Spirit in the life of Mary at age of fourteen. The new testament books of Matthew and Luke record the only virgin birth. Mary conceived the Son of the Living God by the power and authority of the Holy Ghost. Mary by faith submitted to the will of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Also, John the Baptist testifies of the guiding power of the Holy Ghost in the fulfillment of God's work therefore, individuals must be baptized by the Holy Spirit. Peter proclaimed the message of Jesus at Caesarea, to Cornelius and his household who were gentiles. The apostle John also testifies of the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit in his life while on the Isle of Patmos.

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[30]Acts 11:16 RSV

> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying "Write what you see in a book.[31]
>
> Revelation 1:10 RSV

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is advantageous to the believer today as well as in the time period of the writing of the New Testament. The fruits of the spirit are available for the church to exercise in sharing the good news of Jesus today. One is reminded that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are granted to the church.

The Church: It Is Not A Bell Tower, Stained Glass Windows Nor Pipe Organ

In the gospel of Saint Matthew 16:18, Jesus says, "Upon this rock I build my church and the powers of death shall not prevail against it".[32] The church is people, it is the *communio sanctorum*,[33] the community of the saints. Saints are described as those who believe in God and are set apart or sanctified for the work of the Lord which includes persons identified as lay and ordained. According to Ephesians 5:23, "Christ is the head of the church."[34] These are a people called out of the world, who rightly worship God in spirit and in truth. It is obvious that this description of the church denotes an invisible church, that is one without boundaries of walls, windows, or denomination.

The church has a functional identification of the proclamation of the Word, the

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[31]Rv 1:10 RSV

[32]Mt 16:18 RSV

[33]Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.1941 reprint, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 553 (page reference is to reprint edition).

[34]Eph 5:23 RSV

administration of the sacraments commanded by Jesus and to faithfully live a disciplined life. However, the function of the church is not limited to the previously mentioned without the inclusion of the grace of God.

Grace calls forth the operation of the Holy Spirit, and a theology which denotes the essence of reaching souls for Christ through extending boundless love, endless faith, and unfailing hope. Proclamation of the word as a major function of the church can not omit the command stated in Luke, the message of repentance and forgiveness:

> ...Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem[35]
>
> Luke 24:46-47 RSV

Jesus left a clear message to the church even in his journeys, carrying the salvation to Jewish and Gentiles alike. As previously stated, the Samaritans to whom Jesus taught and preached were biracial. Too, Joseph a Jewish person, son of Jacob, married Aseneth, daughter of Potipherah, an Egyptian, the same Joseph is the father of biracial children, Manasseh and Ephraim. Also, David the son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, married Bathsheba, an Hematic woman, therefore their offspring, known as King Solomon was biracial. The command to the apostles and disciples was to preach to all people and to baptize all nations which denotes across racial boundaries.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are oppressed **(bruised)**,

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[35]Lk 24:46-47 RSV

> to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.[36]
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> Luke 4:46-47

This passage commands all who refer to themselves as Christian, the application of all of the communicable attributes of God, exemplified in Jesus, and proclaimed in the church doctrine to be actively practiced by those who consider themselves the church.

The United States has the appearance of a multi cultural, multiracial society in our work places, shopping centers, restaurant facilities and recreational events. A video tape of most Sunday worship services would convey a race and culture conscious picture depicting a people appearing to possess patience, longsuffering, and in reasonable harmony with others who are just like "me". However, Sunday is a reenactment of marginally practiced Christianity throughout the week. A people who profess to a systematic theology, faith in God, belief in Jesus and acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit, lose sight of the words spoken by Jesus:

> Who is my mother, and who are my brothers? And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister, and mother.[37]
>
> Matthew 12:48-49

Is the church today, positioned with arms folded across the chest sending the message of a closed society to anyone different? If the church has become a closed society, then another Biblical text has been omitted from consideration. I John 5:4 says "For whatever

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[36]Lk 4:46-47 RSV

[37]Mt 12:48-49 RSV

is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith."[38] Racial prejudice should evoke a concern for ones position of rebirth and faith journey. Peter had to overcome his race prejudice and other apostles and disciples were confronted with their prejudice. Peter did not have complete freedom as long as he held his prejudice. Neither did the Greeks have freedom with the Jewish people as long as prejudicial attitudes were prevalent.

The issue facing the church today is quoted in John 5:6, "Wilt thou be made whole?" [39] As the Christian community continues to maintain prejudices and inflict pain upon biracial offsprings, they must realize the message that is being sent to the biracial person whose parents are both African American and any other race. That biracial child is constantly aware that he or she is the embodiment of hate. A constantly repeated statement is "My white family hates the Black person in me and the black family rejects the White person in me". An attitude of hate is at enmity with God and a display of resistance to the power of the Holy Ghost.

The absence of trust between a people with a history of animosity is a major factor. Trust in God is comprehensible, however, the issue for each race is how much trust can be placed in people whose culture is different from their own. Some have been able to trust and others have identified common grounds upon which to initiate dialogue for peace. Psalm 107 says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so"[40] that is to say it is time

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[38]1Jn 5:4 RSV

[39]Jn 5:6 RSV

[40]Ps 107:2 RSV

to proclaim areas of victory in order that others may begin the journey toward racial harmony. The redeemed who have freedom in Christ live in freedom proclaiming to others how they too can access this life.

Biracial persons, the forgotten victims in race prejudice are enduring emotional, mental and spiritual bruises from both races even from those who claim to be Christian. The Black family rejects the white race of the offspring while the White family rejects the black race of the offspring. God has a way of dealing with the foolishness of the world. According to I Corinthians 1:27, "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong".[41] The opportunity to overcome hate with understanding, patience and love is available in this person inflicted by bruises from both the Black and White America. It does appear that God has chosen the biracial person to amplify the foolishness of prejudice in the world.

God's word says that humankind is to strive toward peace, harmony, unity and love without any disclaimer that the person must be just like "me". Prejudice carries the weight of sin and death. Hebrews 12:14-17 illuminates the message of God throughout the Bible that humankind is to love one another and that means all people.

> Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fail to obtain the grace of God; that no 'root of bitterness' spring up and cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled, that no one be immoral or irreligious like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to

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[41] 1Cor 1:27 RSV

repent, though he sought it with tears.[42]

Hebrews 12:14-17 RSV

Jesus asks the condemning question when he said and I paraphrase, how can you love God whom you have not seen and do not love your white and black sister and brother whom you have seen. As stated in the 115th Psalm,

> O Israel, trust thou in the Lord.....O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord...Ye that fear the Lord trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield.[43]
>
> Psalms 115:9-11

Trust in God as the Psalmist as described causes one to consider life other than in fear of ones' vulnerability. If Jesus, John the Baptist, or Paul for instance paused to focus upon whether people would like them, neither would have been of value for sharing the gospel. John would have always preached the socially acceptable message. Paul would not have responded to the need of the Greek and non-Jewish to profess the blessings of life following Christ. Jesus would not have spent so much time talking one on one with such persons as tax collectors (thieves), adulteress, rich young rulers, the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus would have stayed focussed upon his vulnerability of an unshared cultural heritage and communicated only with those whom he found like him.

A legacy left to the world and Christianity by Jesus is the most dominant model of ministry known to humankind. It is a model which exposes ones vulnerability. Vulnerable meaning the confrontation of ones fear to always be accepted, loved and respected. Jesus placed himself among the people, communicating with them rather than at them.

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[42]Heb 12:14-17 RSV

[43]Ps 115:9-11 RSV

Communication from that historical legacy teaches one to talk with others with a respect of them as a person. This communication style does not allow an attitude or the need of superiority therefore, the other parties in the dialogue are not in a forced position of inferiority. It is a teacher, teaching others to be teachers by theory and example. It is a model negating the traditional limitations of beginning with a few in number, limited in spiritual wisdom and moving them toward a Christ focussed maximization. This focus has limitless possibilities to be accomplished by a few.

According to the Gospel of Matthew 10: 1-16 Jesus called the twelve and taught them by listening and speaking and sensing, and ultimately by example. Again the gospels record this style of ministry. According to the gospel of Luke 10:1-16, Jesus teaches seventy through the mode of direct communications in small groups equipping them to minister to others. The seventy were placed in vulnerable positions to become instrumental in providing individual persons with a sense of identity.

The culture comfort zone resident will always challenge those following the model of Jesus because Jesus was challenged by persons of that characteristic. In Luke 10:29, the comfort zone resident in the person of a scribe challenged Jesus on the word and actions by asking, "Who is my neighbor?"[44] Jesus answers his question and the question of the church today focussed on mission work in foreign lands or the denial of ministry as mission work. His answer challenges the culturally comfortable person to minister beyond established culture and race boundaries, to place oneself in vulnerable positions for witnessing the Kingdom.

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[44]Lk 10:29 RSV

> A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. [45]
>
> Luke 10:30 RSV

In the parabolic expression style, Jesus tells of another man. A man from Samaria on the same road of life can see a human being who was, abused and bruised by life. The exemplary traveler decides to place himself in a vulnerable position to provide encouragement to the injured traveler. The Samaritan knew of life free of fears and he encouraged another to live free from the fear of strangers by his actions. It was probably a stranger who robbed him yet, it was a stranger and a person of a different race who helped him.

The theory is a ministry to equip ministers, lay and ordained to minister.

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[45]Lk 10:30 RSV

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT MODEL

Among the created worlds were varied hues of the basic colors: grounds of deep green to tall pale green grass, rust colored to dark brown trees, rocks of all colors, and green leaves changing from burnt red to golden rod yellow and as varied as nature likewise are the characteristics of human creatures. Just as varied are human responses to negative kinds of stimulus in the world.

Invisible from the physical eye among the beauty of the created world an animal like vapor skulked among every living human creature and as it was allowed controlling power kissed them with a poisonous venom. The venom marred the created being with a syrup like glaze that attempted to hold that person and others in a state of distorted natural beauty. This skulking vapor animated by its own power, desire to consume and the unsuspecting nature of the created being when allowed, dissipated beauty and left the stain of the vapor's nature to destroy rather than to exhort.

The vapor's venomous kiss left the created being with a need to be superior in relation to all of the created world. The same vapor kissed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; when Cain was kissed by the vapor, he killed his brother Abel; the same vapor kissed the children of Israel causing them to loose sight of God's power which delivered them from bondage in Egypt. This same all consuming vapor tempted Jesus in the

needed for harmonious existence among God's created beings.

This acrimoniously consuming vapor empowered by a blood, tear and fear stained history continues to kiss the weak in humanity today with the venomous desire to be superior. The weak in society wear the stain of hatred, persecution, discrimination and domination, one race against another. This venomous kiss by the vapor serves as a camouflage to divert one from attaining wholeness. The model for this project is designed for those who are willing to remove the camouflage of distorted peace and wholeness in order for the dominance of divine peace, harmony and wholeness.

Wholeness is present for those faithful and obedient to the great and second commandments of God, to love God and to love ones' neighbor as oneself. God is love and hatred is not of God. The model is designed for those who seek to know and live according to God's ultimate will which is to live in harmony. Harmonious living means every person can live as the person that God created, molded and formed around the background of ones culture and belief in Christ. Cultural diversity becomes an additional blessing from the Lord.

A biracial person embodies cultural and racial diversity which does exemplify that Black and White can live an harmoniously supportive existence. The end product of this model is to replace race hatred and tolerance with race and cultural appreciation as a positive power to influence spiritual growth. In that God created a diverse world and conveys that creation is good, and this world which exemplifies diversity states that the presence of diversity is for good. The objective is for one to become cognizant of the power of love to defeat the venomous effect of racism and to be restored to the love and

the beauty of spiritual fulfillment as God's human creatures.

Identification of Needs

Different prospective's within human nature cause people to respond to the remainder of the world through the limited expanse of their own perception of life. For instance, the physically challenged person has always been present in our society however, they did not have a strong social or political voice in the decision making process which ultimately affected their lives. The dominant ability of persons in this society allows one to stand, walk and climb steps of their own volition therefore, those persons incapable or inhibited to easily mobilize themselves under their own volition suffered because no one heard their cry for help. It has been only recently that those not physically challenged have realized that some individuals are not physically able to walk up steps or stand on an escalator. Now laws require that public buildings should be handicap accessible.

The church has been identified to have a similar blind spot as the secular world in ministering to the needs and challenges of biracial individuals. No, biracial persons are not physically challenged however their political power base crying in the wilderness of society and the church is muffled by a non-God fearing people whose primary focus is hate, tradition and retribution. Jesus was constantly challenged by the pharisaic concept of traditional religion to which he would not conform. The mockery of Jesus' arrest and trial is exemplary of a character defect to be superior and any position less than provokes some personalities to seek retribution.

The social order in the United States has determined that any child who has one

parent of African heritage, that the child is Black. This race determination is without regard for the race of the other parent. For instance, Tiger Woods is referred to as a black professional golfer because one of his parents is African American without any regard for his mother who is Asian American. In considering him and other biracial individuals by one race is to force ones perspective of race upon another, forcing them to deny their cultural heritage from both parents. During the years of slavery it was economically advantageous to consider children who had one African American parent as a slave. Biracial individuals raise the issue as to what is the reason today to continue to deny anyone their cultural heritage from both parents.

Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church stumbled along in ministering to and addressing the needs of biracial individuals as uni-racial persons, either as Black Americans or White Americans. This style of ministry was not a phenomenon to Grace nor to the African Methodist as a denomination alone. Often actions in response to tradition without testing the most recent educational advances causes one to operate in ignorance. In recent years, Church School literature has become available to address the needs of peoples of all races and most recently, multi-cultural communities. Within the last year, the mission organizations have begun to discuss multi-culturalism in ministering to people of various backgrounds as the church continues to build communities of faith. The need to address the biracial person and their needs has not been identified. However, race in the United States historically and continues to be predetermined by the dominant racial traditions of the slave era.

A Church School class of teenagers and pre-teens turned into a pastor and youth

rap session in response to neither parties feeling totally bound by the traditional structure of a church school class when spiritual growth is lurching for freedom. The results of the session was the enlightenment of the pastor and the church as to its responsibility to set the standard for the world rather than to follow the world's standard. Biracial children and adults face a conflict in their homes, families, schools, jobs, recreation and simple dinner out with Mom or Dad that the remainder of the world does not have to endure. The question is if the church can not help one with her or his identity and conflicts in life then, where should an individual turn for help.

The pastor began to investigate the issues brought to the church first, with other church members, school and city officials. Small discussion groups were formed composed of the pastor and local church officers to further identify the dilemma facing the church. The issues facing the biracial population were legitimated by similar accounts presented in the meetings. Some scenarios were reoccurring from generation to generation. After gathering information from the church, the next step was to conduct individual interviews with members of community boards to determine whether the city and school's were aware of the concerns faced by the biracial children in particular.

The church officers assumed the responsibility to contact other churches in the city and local churches in the denominational administration district. The issues brought to the church by the youth were validated in other geographical areas however, their seemingly small percentage of biracial's in the church population did not warrant urgency to seek a solution.

The next obvious place to look for a model of ministry was the seminary

community of faculty and administrators. The seminary consultations for resource material on ministering to biracial persons resulted in the revelation that a model had not been developed. Repeatedly, the faith community of higher education stated that a model for ministering to the needs of biracial persons was not available.

Grace AME Church with a sizeable youth group comprised of biracial persons looking to their church and its leadership for a solution were not interested that a model did not already exist. Therefore, on a Sunday morning as the worshiping community gathered to hear a word of consolation and encouragement for themselves to endure in their faith, a plea went forth to form a focus group and context associates for Grace, Bellefontaine, Ohio, to develop a model of ministry for the biracial, bicultural population. The plea was to request the participation of all persons with a biracial family member in a research project to develop a model of ministry to benefit the biracial youth and their families. The plea was extended beyond denominational and ecclesiastical boundaries. All were invited to participate. The persons responding with the most interest in ministry, were asked to become candidates for the context associates on the project.

In the inception of the project, no one was aware of the monumental implications that the subject would have upon the community and surrounding areas. The request for context associate candidates was disseminated through the community by individuals specifically, from Grace AME through verbal conversations inviting people to participate. Biracial persons from different generations ranging in age from eight to eighty stepped forward to acknowledge their pains and bruises of self denial and family inconsistencies. Agonized faces told of a childhood generations ago as one sibling was favor by extended

family members in relation to the child's texture of hair and fair complexion. Of the senior persons sharing their struggle, many still lived with their pain and were not comfortable to participate in the project other than as anonymous human resources. Their contributions were instrumental in the primary stages of the project as a guide to identify long range goals from the short range goals.

Prior to the selection of the context associates, a meeting was held at Grace with all persons interested in the project. The agenda for the pre-project meeting was the task of identifying the goals and some objectives to be met. It was important to determine who would be the immediate and extended recipients of the project, also what position would the church assume in providing ministry in the community. In order to have a positive effect upon the lives of the larger percentage of youth in Grace, the questions and concerns of the pre-project group had to be stated without concern for retribution.

The Pre-Project Structure Team

The sensitive subject to be discussed demanded the establishment of procedures for the discussion to flow spontaneously. Due to time constraints and the urgency to gather information from this group, the facilitator proposed the guidelines of disclosure by a group census. The following guidelines were established as the procedure for the meeting. Each participant has an obligation:

- To respect the opinions and suggestions of others
- To share honest opinions and perceptions
- To speak directly to the topic as the most expeditious process to gather

- To speak directly to the topic as the most expeditious process to gather information
- To carry nothing spoken from the session as gossip
- To practice anonymity and confidentiality
- To share one's feelings
- To avoid criticism of others comments or self expression

Everyone present was a members of Grace and entered a verbal agreement to be responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the procedures as outlined. Also, of this group those who did not participate in the project as the context associates, were asked the same questions given to the context associates on the questionnaire.

This pre-project group was monitored by the facilitator and a secretary or recorder. Participants shared their frustrations and anxieties openly. It became the facilitators role to listen sagaciously, to analyze and recognize the true issues in the discussion and to record those issues. The recorder and the facilitator read the group responses at fifteen minute intervals to the participants in order to establish major headings for outlining the goals. At the close of the session, all of the categories were read aloud to the participants to verify that all information was accurately recorded and categorized according to the general consensus of the group. The product from this session became the statement of goals and objectives for the model.

Expressions of gratitude were extended to everyone present. People were encouraged to consider their calendars for the next several months to determine if they could commit to serve as a context associate on the ministry model project. The secretary

recorded the names address and telephone numbers of all participants.

A very productive session was closed by a prayer of thanksgiving and encouragement to endure until the end of the project.

Preparation for the Project

As the actual model was being considered in response to the goals and objectives outlined in the Pre-Project Structure team meeting, the time had arrived to locate resource material beneficial to meeting the goals in a timely manner. Secular periodicals were researched for any information concerning biracial individuals or intermarried couples. The probability of issues between intermarried couples and those issues faced by biracial individuals were highly possible. In addition to secular periodicals, ecclesiastical and theological periodicals were researched closely for relevant material to the topic.

The concern of where to begin was the initial thought after identifying the issues and resources confronting biracial families. The Bible had to provide information on a question demanding an answer. the question requiring an answer, what does God have to say, became the basic foundation of the model. Therefore, after collecting resource material from the library and purchasing relevant books, the Bible was the only authoritative source upon which to build the foundation for the model.

The Bible had to state clearly answers to the issues brought by the youth or the model would be valueless as a solution to a problem. In addition to resource material the context associates were in need of biblical references which addressed the issues that faced

them as nucleus and extended family members of biracial persons. A major concern dealt with understanding conflict in biracial families.

Again, the sensitivity of the topics required an atmosphere conducive to discussing intelligently and without provocation, the issues of racism. The context associates would most likely be comprised of African and European Americans. Anger was certainly beneath the surface for the family members of biracial individuals just as it was present in the focus group participants. Issues surrounding anger and how to be in some control of anger while sharing which was necessary placed constraints on the process to maintain order and decorum.

In addition to an atmosphere conducive for spiritual growth, the different means by which individuals retain information was a determining factor as to the teaching and training processes to be incorporated in the model. A history of working with the context associates determined the most effective means of initiating dialogue and the retention of information. However, the model is designed to effect retention and therefore change by incorporating various learning methods such as visual, auditory and written procedures.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE REPLICABLE MODEL

Data Collection

Introduction

At eleven o'clock on Sunday morning the brownstone brick church at 233 Main Street reflected an image similar to many churches in the city. The cultural composition of most churches is determined by ones' race and culture. Ecclesiastical leadership in many dominations appear to be comfortable portraying a divided kingdom of God. However, the adequacy of a divided kingdom becomes questionable when an individual is a member of two races and cultures adamant to express a dual identity in attending church. The relevant question to a country attempting to maintain its status as a world leader and a zealous supporter of social justice becomes, what is the church saying to the biracial community as well as the world community.

In a technologically advanced society, church ministries operating out of the historical perspective of racial and cultural intolerance promotes injustices in society and perpetuates a divided kingdom. Many seminarians are taught worship techniques sensitive to and projecting the varied ethnic means of expression in worship through music and impromptu prayer just to name a few. Contextually based education provides the future

minister prayerfully, to become sensitive to social issues which impact the worship community. In response to advanced training techniques for effective ministry, a ministry of tolerance becomes a ritual in ignorance. Ignorance in the church is thought and action absent of a growing understanding of the will of God. Technique can become a ritual of praxis on ethnic Sunday. A primary concern for the biracial individual is that the church much like the remainder of the world is institutionally structured to force person to choose one race as opposed to another on a Sunday morning. The general population of the Grace AME must be surveyed to begin a program of enlightenment.

The procedures for data collection on this project are developed to assist in measuring scientifically the participants response to the ministry model. A pre-questionnaire has been completed by the population and the context associates as one form of monitoring. A focus card is another tool for monitoring program interest in a local church and a means of registering potential lay minister trainees.

Questionnaire

Bellefontaine, Ohio, small town USA, is reserved about written information which documents them as a people. The census and taxes hyperbolically are as old as dirt therefore, an established infringement to gather information is allowed and accepted. The non-familiarity of a new document with uncertainties as to the ultimate use and publication of the responses has caused many questionnaires to be thrown in the trash. Therefore, the method to solicit responses from the population always depends upon the trust level of the participants. The process of collecting must be sensitive to the age and culture of the

potential respondents. The questionnaire (see appendix D-1) or pretest responses were acquired through an individualized interview process by the pastor. The interviews were conducted in either of three locations: at the church, in a person's home or on the telephone.

An analysis of the information required to determine congregational and individual growth requires a qualitative method of data collection. Theoretically, a quantitative method can be effective. However, the results have been presented a bi-lateral purpose. Members would have looked at a form which was distant and designed to calculate information and would have given calculated type responses. The formula for the questionnaire is thought and experience provoking for the respondent. Instead of receiving simple direct answers, the responses lead to the revelation of family trials, conflict, or spiritual concerns which were addressed in a forum with the population. A bilateral response type of questionnaire has been designed to motivate respondents to become active formally and informally in the project.

The pre-project questions are designed to glean as much information as possible to determine value in the model. A post project questionnaire was used to assist in the evaluation phase.

The questions are personal, such as ones own race and parents. This type question is designed to encourage reflective thoughts on lineage within a family. Some of the questions cause one to probe his or her life, the lives of family members and the challenges of childhood. Other questions allow the surface of emotions subverted in ones history. In a context where people are politically active, serving on voter registration

drives, and manning voting stations yet the mention of affirmative action for a public forum was met with trepidation. These same people in this controlled setting are confronted with issues of public policy questions on the form addressing political and economic reform. Many questions challenged one's ownership in determining value for oneself and the lives of one's children. The ultimate value of this type question is that it becomes a tool to determine whether a church can be motivated to sponsor a ministry to biracial persons. Additionally, the purpose is to determine the need for this ministry as an asset to the population.

The questions were brief, direct and stated with the objective of clarity rather than ambiguity. Due to the procedure for collecting information, a time period of approximately three weeks was scheduled for gathering information from the population. The context associates had the opportunity to respond to the same questionnaire in one workshop session. In order to allow verbal responses prior to the closing of the first session, the time is extend beyond that of the remaining sessions. Information from the sample population who serve as the control group and the information from the context associates, the test group can combined on one matrix to determine any correlation between one's race and their genealogy. The issues of social, secular, and political responsibilities and influence have been placed on a chart for monitoring through out the project. One's personal history and genealogy is placed on the "Y" axis and individual race and gender are listed on the "X" axis of the matrix (see appendix G-2).

The matrix provides a quick reference for the information gathered from the control population and the context population pre-tests and a comparison for the post test.

A color coded system of recording pre and post data can be compiled on the same matrix. It is the option of the project monitor, or facilitator to color coordinate the responses of the population control group separate from the context test group.

Focus Group Interest Card

When a pastor or lay person becomes sensitive of the need to minister racial conflict dissolution, one means is to develop a focus group if possible of biracial persons. The focus group can be composed of persons who are parenting a child of a different race, for instance white families are adopting black children. The focus group can be comprised of persons who are biracial, family members of biracial individuals or single race persons interested in developing a ministry focusing on racial healing. In order to determine interest the Focus Group Interest Card (see appendix C-1) can be distributed during, prior to or after morning worship. A display table may be used in the vestibule. An interest card box can be placed on the table beside the card display for collecting the cards. The pastor or ministries council leader can be responsible for monitoring the box to determine a reasonable size class. The class can consist of as few as five to seven people. Your ministry training class can be composed from the focus group or those persons with an interest in this ministry. The card can also serve as the pre-registration card.

Upon review of the cards, the churches' focal person can communicate with each person preferably by telephone to establish a definite time for the focus groups' first session. A telephone conversation can communicate personal interest and care for the individual. That session would be the information gathering session. That information

becomes resource data on any issues to be considered in the lectures or workshops.

The Focus Group Interest Card request of the person the date that the card is completed, name, address and telephone number. A space is provided for the name of the church to be recorded. As the cards are located in a high traffic area, visitors may have an interest and attend the group themselves or encourage a family member to participate. The cross generation aspect of issues initiated the consideration to include age ranges on the card such as 6-10, 11-15, 16-23, 24-44, 45-65, and 65 up. This allows some flexibility in designing focus groups across generations.

Genealogy and its impact as an issue to investigate requires some response on the card. This information will serve as means of coordinating the context associates if the focus group participants want to serve as trained ministers and lay leaders in this area. This focus of attention to equip the saints for the work of the church leads to the last section of the card. Two questions address ministry and training. The first question is "Have you participated in a ministry to biracial, bi-cultural needs?" The second question is "Will you participate in a training to minister to biracial, bi-cultural families? After a person has dedicated time to complete the Focus Group Card, they should have an idea of a timely response from the church leadership. A final comment is that the respondent will receive a response from the church within two weeks concerning the formulation of a group.

The information can be placed in a computer file for focus group participants which should be checked weekly. This procedure allows close monitoring of groups and for the future scheduling of additional groups. The cards are a tool relevant for

developing the schedule for training ministers to train others in the same program.

Post Test

The post test (see appendix G-1) results from the context associates are gathered as the facilitator meets and dialogues with this test group over the scheduled period to implement the model. The post test is a formality in the documentation process particularly for the person who has lived with and watched the transformation occur. However, the post test can be given to the context test group at the end of the final session.

The post test of the control group population has the possibility of being ambiguous because of the dissemination of information from the context test group. The context test group hopefully was motivated to share their training with members of the population. In small cities information which, can be shared often is shared with other family members. A situation could occur to make exact measurement of the information provided to the population unreliable. The sermon texts and sermons are the only official information available to the population. The post-project questionnaire can be placed in the hands or mailboxes of the population control group designating a response due date.

Time Chart

A schedule of the model was developed at the first seminar session in accordance with the participants calendars. If the context is the same as the focus group then, the schedule can be established at a focus or post focus group session. Due to the emotional

stress which occurs in the seminar and workshop sessions, for future reference, these sessions should be scheduled approximately every two weeks. The four sermons can be delivered once monthly. They should be delivered on a Sunday to effect the greater number of the pre-tested population. The following is the proposed sequence for the model: pre-test; Month 1, pre-focus group and focus group session(see appendix C-1), sermon one "I Didn't Ask for This" (see appendix C-2), lecture seminar "Sensitivity" (see appendix C-3); Month 2, (see appendix D) workshop session "Discovery," dramatic presentation "The Snowball Fight," seminar session "It's Not My Problem"; Month 3, sermon two "Committed to the Will" (see appendix E-1), seminar "Camouflage" (see appendix E-2), workshop on "What does God Say?" (see appendix E-3); Month 4 , sermon two "Reading the Signs" (see appendix F-3), sermon one "The Sword" (see appendix F-1), closing workshop "Redefine" (see appendix F-4), post-test sessions. The chart of this schedule is provided to the context associates.

Stages of the Model

First Month

Once a church has decided to provide this ministry model to the church, during the decision making stage it is appropriate to begin to share the stages with members of the church. As many members as possible will be able to provide opinions and suggestions as the most effective time to hold the meeting without conflicting with community activities. The population should know through a public church announcement when the project will be implemented and their role in measuring its effectiveness. A pre-test of the population

would include the testing of any potential context associates. If the pre-test data collection is the individualized personal response method, the pre-test should be initiated three weeks before the first month stage of the model. The pre-test results is recorded on the Pre-Post Data Matrix. This phase is your first week project.

During the pre-test data collection, the focus group interest cards should be placed in a highly traffic pattern area of the church. The response card box should be beside or in front of a display of the cards. When the cards are available, it is a courtesy to make the announcement to the context. The card box should be monitored and all persons called within a two week period to schedule the focus group session. Focus group attendees should be told to allow a two hour time period with a refreshment break for their meeting.

This is an opportunity to be creative in bringing the focus group together. Each person might have to introduce another and say something pleasant about them. The location of the meeting is at the discretion of the facilitator. After everyone is present the prayer titled "Diversity in Me"is either prayed by the facilitator or provided for group reading. Then the facilitator provides a brief introduction to the model by stating the goals of the model. It is important to know that the next few weeks dedicated to the project also equips the participant to minister to others in addition to their family members. A group reading of the goals is beneficial in understanding the process.

The goals and objectives should be given to the participants. Allow brief moments for questions or comments after each point. Read the following personal and ministry goals aloud:

- To have an enhanced understanding and appreciation of cultural dynamics for the

biracial individual and their family

- To personify God's message of racial harmony while cognitive of ones' identity determined by experience and heritage
- To distinguish between cultural morality and biblical morality
- To augment skill in conflict resolution
- To initiate a Christ based racial healing process which transforms persons from a position of race tolerance to race and cultural appreciation
- To empower the lay ministry with tools instrumental for working toward harmonious families and faith communities
- To migrate from the traditional limitations to Christian maximization, meaning the limitless possibilities to be accomplished by a few
- To develop a model of ministry cognitive of individual differences in retention
- To improve communications skills: listening, speaking, etymology, colloquialisms.

The statement of goals and objectives may seem long however, the model has been developed for your lively participation. You will become family to one another during this process if you continue as the ministry team for the church, church families and your community. As volunteers, they have identified themselves as persons most interested in this ministry in the church and each one should be encouraged to become a context associate. In this session each person is encouraged to participate in and initiate dialogue whenever one feels it necessary. Openness becomes instrumental for spiritual growth and increases the participants capability in working with others. These are similar statements can be used as ice breakers for the focus group.

In order to establish an atmosphere of not attribution, that is not anything said in the group can leave the room which is shared in confidence, guidelines of conduct were established. Neither is anyone person's name to be linked in any manner with thoughts shared in these sessions. Confidentiality is required in order to establish an atmosphere of trust. Trust is a pre-requisite for openness. Therefore it becomes the responsibility of the group to establish an atmosphere of trust through a verbal or written covenant. Each participant is required to conduct himself or herself in accordance with the covenant with others for your ministry to be successful. This information should preface the brainstorming session to acquire the remaining elements for the covenant.

Each person participates by suggesting their ideas of elements to help make this session successful. For instance, one person can not "make just" of another. One person in the group records all of the suggestions. Then the group is to participate in the covenant.

This procedure provides the participants with ownership of the process to follow. The facilitator might state the reason that each one is asked to covenant with each other is because it provides the participant with ownership of the process. All participants should enter the covenant with one another to be supportive and being supportive includes consistently attending the sessions.

After the covenant is established as they are now or will become your ministers for this model, a time line should be agreed upon for the next sessions. This group should be made aware of the importance of each aspect of the model which includes the sermons, workshops, seminars and the dramatic presentation. As a part of your closing, at least

fifteen minutes should be allotted for questions or comments. For others to become context associates, the church population should be informed of the dates and times of the seminar sessions. Prayerfully the meeting has been beneficial to all and one person should offer an impromptu prayer in closing.

Sermon "I Didn't Ask For This"

The second presentation during the first month is the sermon to the church, "I Didn't Ask For This." Two supportive text Esther 4:10-17 and Romans 8:26-28 confirm the theme that in our limited existence of time and space, we do not know what to pray, however God's Spirit prays for us. Living a life of faith one is assured that all things work for good to those who love the Lord. The pericope, Esther 4:10-17, is the epitome of call, resistance, transformation and obedience to the Spirit of God even at the potential cost of ones life. The new testament pericope, Romans 8:26-28 is assurance of the omnipresence of God even, in the trials of life. The other text referenced in the sermon demonstrate and support the theology of the model which exclaims trust in God.

Seminar: Sensitivity

The sermon establishes the necessity of persons called by God to become sensitive to the struggles of others. Esther had become a Queen who perceived herself separate from her own people. The spiritual presence of God called her to sensitivity and service. Sensitivity is the theme for seminar session one with the context associates. The session is divided into four parts. A sensitivity prayer opens session one.

All activities of part two in this session are designed to help each person become sensitive of others and their needs. The method of introductions to assist with the goal to have an enhanced understanding and appreciation of other cultural dynamics is to acknowledge the complex components of culture among person professing like culture. Each person should introduce themselves by responding to their hopes for their own participation.

Another element of establishing the procedure for the project was to designate a recorder and a contact person to assume the responsibility of notifying members of schedule changes. One very important component in establishing the procedure is the brainstorming session on group responsibilities to other members. The product from the brainstorming session will become the covenant. The covenant is vital because information presented in the second seminar will provoke comments from the associates which should remain within the group.

"Our Plate is Full" is the subject of the part three, first month lecture to the context associates. The goals of distinguishing biblical and cultural morality will be implied in the lecture. The result of the information provided is to augment skills in conflict resolution. Further, lecture one is to initiate a Christ based racial healing process of personal transformation.

(1) One's attitude toward participation will affect their transformation. Full mental participation will lead the context associates on a sensitivity journey backwards in time to the realization of history's impact upon current issues which have a source as old as biblical human history. This reflective journey begins with an evaluation of the slave era to

evoke compassionate understanding of the roles people played. Leaving the slave era, one is led to empathize with the trials of the American Indian. At that point the journey focuses upon tension and the history of tension through biblical analysis. The Bible emphatically acknowledges that original tension began in heaven and landed on earth. The sin of ones need for the status superior has a dual need for an inferior. The sensitivity journey closes as the participants recognize that the products of the sin addressed in this model are pride and racism. This dual product pride and racism has a dual negative effect upon a people seeking their identity while being blocked by the church.

After a break, the group will reassemble for part four. This is an opportunity for open discussion. As the discussion ceases, everyone should confirm the time and date for the next meeting. An impromptu prayer is in order by one of the participants. The discussion which, is part four of the seminar is the close of the first months activities.

Month Two

Workshop: Discovery

Month two activities begin with the "Discovery" workshop. The month activities focus on the goals of improving communications skills, particularly listening, speaking, and reading body language. As the context and focus groups are introduced to the clown ministry as a mode of ministry, the goal to address different retention methods is met, as well as the sermons to both the population and the contact associates.

As in session one, the prayer can be distributed to the participants or the facilitator may read or designate a different reader for each session. The prayer is a plea to God to

lead God's people toward a willingness to discover the person inside of their projected image. Following the prayer a twenty minute discussion is led to address any concerns from the previous session.

Parts three and four address the focus for this session which is discovery. Two television situation comedy series, "All in the Family" and "The Jefferson's" highlight prejudice's deceptive power to see prejudice in others and not in self. The difficulty of self revelation can be discussed during the part four discovery session questions. The context associates are given the same questionnaire as the population.

The questions require short narrative answers. The facilitator might want to elaborate on some of the potential answers. The interjection of humor can set the atmosphere of relaxing the respondents. This is not a test, I repeat this is not a test is an example of creating atmosphere. It is important to help the respondents to know that their answers cannot be wrong because it is their response. A person should understand that they will not be judged by anyone. This is a tool for each one to measure personal growth during the next several weeks.

There should be no collaboration (mother-daughter, husband-wife, cousins, siblings, etc.) as to specific responses. The facilitator must be present to answer any questions of clarity. Designate the next 30 minutes for the completion of your discovery forms. Light refreshments can be provided by the members of the group and shared at this time. Upon the completion of the written material, open the discussion for participants to share answers and identify ways to be supportive of growth in all members. As each session will reveal the closing is a prayer.

Dramatic Presentation: The Snowball Fight

The month two activity which helps the youth with discovery of their own gifts without their identifying with any other human is the clown ministry. Persons from the focus group can be the participants in the dramatic presentation "The Snowball Fight." Some prerequisites for the presentation are as follows:

- training to provide the techniques for miming
- if possible use biracial persons of any age for the presentation and their family members
- scripture verses that support the Clown ministry should be read

  I Corinthians 1:27

  Corinthians 4:9,10

  Isaiah 30:15 Passages of biblical confidence

  Psalm 40:5

  Psalm 115:9-13

  Psalm 125:1-5

The mime's perform all of the action in the drama which is a narrated presentation. Select a person who reads dramatically and enunciates clearly. The focus group can help with their own costumes. Your church might develop a clown ministry which, means an investment in the hair, make-up and other basics to the costumes could be used more than once. In the clown ministry the face is basic snow color white, the remainder of the face is highlighted with a color to coordinate with the clowns' costume. Christian clowns are

without gender or heritage. Their existence is to glorify God in reaching individuals through humor.

The clothes (see appendix D-2)should be placed in a convenient room for the youth to dress and have access to a mirror and water. The musician should have a copy of the play and attend any complete practice of the drama. The Narrator should be seen by the participants and the audience as the narrator's inflections of voice affect the drama. As soon as the clowns are dressed one of the characters should lead the prayer after the preface to the prayer.

The play can be presented to the population just prior to an altar prayer or to the context associates. In worship the play should not be announced. At the time prior to the altar call, the narrator should be prepared to enter into the visible area of the church and immediately to the microphone. The characters should not be introduced before nor during worship. At the close of the service the mimes and narrator should be acknowledged. The drama is ministry to focus upon the message of God not the characters.

Seminar: It's Not My Problem

The dramatic presentation employed comedy to reflect the decisions that humans make in the absence of focus upon the Lord. The last of the second month activities is to reflect upon just how limited human efforts are without the mission of Christ as central. The video presentation addresses the goal to provide material in the different modes by which individuals retain information. The documentary will be valuable to several goals:

racial harmony while cognitive of one's identity determined by experience and heritage; to augment skills in conflict resolution; to move from race tolerance to cultural appreciation by knowing and loving people different from oneself.

The producer, director of "Skin Deep" has brought together a culturally diverse group of young people, from different geographical areas of the United States. This microcosm of the nations' view on racism is representative of the intensity of the issue from anger to total indifference. This sample group, composed of twenty-one students will retreat from the physical arena of daily routines to sharing at an extremely personal level. In order for the documentary to serve its purpose for this project, certain issues will be focal points of the dialogue between the students:

- the imbalance in society and the need for affirmative action
- work ethic
- all are judged by the action of one
- stereotypes and their origin
- the destructive nature of hate upon the hater
- racial insensitivity and insecurity
- benefits of being born Anglo-American
- the perceived inadequacy of economic beliefs for society
- internalized racism (I don't want to be...)
- anger because of parents, pretense of ignorance

Pause the tape at the end of each of the bold print sections for discussion. Distribute copies of comments and instruct participants to review comments and the notes

on a section before and after that section is played. Discussion topics or questions are provided.

The broad categories of the documentary are: Personal identity, family relations, college life in America and a three day retreat. The documentary is fifty-three minutes long. However, the effectiveness of the tape is increased with the appropriate pauses noted (see appendix D-3). At the closing session break for 10 minutes then introduce the activity for the next session.

You might begin by stating , "Now that the context group have enjoyed discussing everyone on the tape, their thoughts and comments," it is your turn. Inform the context associates that they will present a scenario from their lives of their most memorable event of racism. Their case presentation can be written or verbal however, it is important to convey that the case information will never be revealed to the public. Too, any written documentation of their case will be returned to them. The following questions are thought questions for the members in organizing their presentation for the next session:

How did you feel and what did you think?

Were you in control of the situation?

Can you identify your emotions: anger, jealousy, frustration, hatred, etc.?

Do you recall any mental state which provided you with self protection?

Was your response automatic, preconceived, or thought about at the time?

Who were the people involved?

Where did this happen?

Do you recall when this occurred in your chronological and spiritual life?

Did you resolve the situation?

How did you resolve the issue?

What was the issue?

If given the opportunity, what would you change?

The areas to consider in their presentation reveal personal information which is traceable particularly in small cities or small community people therefore, security of the environment is vital.

The closing is an opportunity to accept any further questions on the assignment. Ask one of the participants to close with an impromptu prayer. Every activity of the model is designed to fulfill the goals in order to attain the objectives.

Month Three

Sermon: Committed to the Will

Do not be discouraged because you are approaching over the half way mark of the project as you deliver the sermon to the population "Committed to the Will." The theme is that an earth focussed hate denies the presence of love and love rejects the presence of hate (see appendix E-1). The sermon text, Amos 5:14-15, 18-24 and Acts 9:10-17, are accounts of two men called by God to respond by traveling to annihilate hate. Amos traveled over land to the Samaritans who were at enmity with the Lord because of their complacency. Ananias had to travel over the road of fear which is a much longer than Amos' journey. Both had to confront fear. Both men, committed to the love of the Lord, traveled the journey necessary to serve faithfully. Their faith journey granted each man a

stronger sense of identity in Christ. Each pericope is a demonstration of faith journeys.

Seminar: Camouflage

The third month activity of the project is a workshop entitled "Camouflage." The session opens with the prayer "Dear God Help Me to Remove My Cover-Up." Society teaches children to keep things to themselves. As one becomes an adult different means to secure oneself from the injury inflicted by society is to strategically devise methods and identities to cover ones inner self. A shy person is taught the techniques to appear outgoing, a carefully devised "cover-up." When least expected, a persons' cover-up slips out of place and a seemingly careless conversation can become an area of rivalry. The goal to be met with this activity is to equip the lay ministry with the tools and instruments for working toward harmonious families and faith communities. Re-enactments of events which, affect ones perspective on life and situations are means of exploring the root of conflict between persons. This activity is a transforming activity in an effort to bring individuals from their isolated events that destroy personalities to maximized relationships in Christ.

Each person will report a memorable event on racism in a dialogue form which took place with a person or persons to the very best of his or her recollection. The verbatim method of reporting the event is beneficial for the group to respond. At this point use a modified version of the supervisory technique. That technique is relevant due to the need of transformation for effective ministry.

One of the lessons learned from the documentary reviewed during the last session

was that change requires a transformation from within. The students shared however, the element necessary for a transformation was not provided. The model for transformation must be existential, from within ones being. Prescriptions and formulas from the observing community rather than the interacting community are without depth and power to transform. This method again, requires the individual to actively participate.

Each person should have an opportunity to share their event and focus on the expressions of racial slander heard in the home because they have a definite effect upon ones identity and require a response from the church. Therefore, the members must review techniques of parenting and grand parenting skills. One's sense of who they are and how that identity is communicated is important. Grandparents of biracial toddlers, parents of biracial youth and teens, uncles and aunts of biracial nieces and nephews together under a common bond sharing their event and its impact upon their lives become effective ministry for all present. Composed of different ages and personal stories, this group supervise themselves into strengthening themselves.

Your transforming text to be read before or during the presentations is:

> Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of you mind that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.[1]
>
> Romans 12:2 RSV

If the text is read at the beginning of the presentations, then pass the following data to the students. If the text is to be read in the middle in your session then distribute the information on the steps of reflection prior to the first presentation.

Informative, is a photocopy of the event.

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[1]Rm 12:2

- What happened or describe the situation?
- What was your role?
- How did you respond?
- Who were the other participants?

Evaluation, is to look at the issues which are not always obvious.

- What emotions did you experience?
- How do you feel about similar situations?
- Would you do anything differently, if you could then describe?
- How does your event effect the way that you minister to your child's needs

  prepared for similar situations

  feelings involved

  judgement of others

Analysis is making obstacles stepping stones toward success.

- What would you prefer to have occur?
- If given sovereign power what would you change?
- What has been the long term effect of this event upon your life?

Theology refers to biblical truths, faith growth and perceptions of God

- Did you realize something about God from this experience?
- Did this experience change your perception of God(think, know, believe)?
- Is there a way for you to convey God to others from your experience of God in this event?
- Is there any impact upon your ability to minister to others?

Procedure: The facilitator should encourage one of the participants to begin by informing the other associates of his or her event. At the close of the presentation on the information pertaining to the event, allow that person to respond to any remaining categories through questions from the associates. Anyone not willing to bring an event at this time very well will bring an event before the project is complete.

When the last person has shared, identify areas that this group might commit themselves individually and collectively to support biracial families and the children. This is the stage of commitment in this portion of the model.

In closing share the reading, "The Cold Within". An impromptu prayer closes the session.

Lecture: What Does God Say?

The opening prayer is "More God." At this point in the model everyone should have increased in understanding and trust in God. The prayer is an acknowledgment of the individual understanding of God yet, there is much more of God to be learned. The lectures and workshops have talked values and questions and issues with biblical responses. The lecture for this session is to formally discuss God and the Bible.

It is important to designate a beginning point, therefore the biblical references begin with Genesis. Noah and his three sons are the only record of life after the flood. The account of Noah's statement to his sons has served as a statement to qualify an inferior race therefore this passage is major in the lecture. The lecture title is "What does God have to say?"(see appendix E-3). The lecture is subdivided into social implications

for the United States and the biblical nature of people.

As this project is nearing the final phase of the model, the goal of identifying more with the image of Christ is the focus. The goal to personify God's message is accomplished throughout the lecture and reinforced during the discussion. Key phrases and terms are provided in part four of this session: value, social value, and political value. Two discussion question are included, also. Allow approximately 35 minutes for the discussion. Close the session with an impromptu prayer.

Sermon: The Sword

The sword is a visual demonstration of the proclamation. An actual eighteen inch blade sword in its sheath is used to discuss judgement. The texts are: I Samuel 21:8-11 and Ephesians 6:10-17. The theme is restated from the written text as follows: Human judgement is the greatest cause of conflict. If you live by the carnal sword which is judgement, then you die by the same sword. If you live by the spiritual sword, then you die under the helmet of salvation. The textual use of the term sword is contrasted to the sword of Goliath or the sword of the word. The message reminds the sermon participants of the power of the sword of the Word of God. This message is designed to equip one in conflict resolution with the sword of peace, and an identity that no one or nothing can destroy.

Re-Valuing

The responses to the questionnaire on value and the communication of value

require an additional workshop on the topic of value. Part one is the opening prayer led by one of the context associates. Part two brings the team to the issue of value. The facilitator must assume a leadership position to motivate the team in re- identifying their concept of value.

The activities begin with an activity on word association and images. The significant key words are: son, sun, sneeze, winter, teacher. It is important to begin to see images and then identify where those images are derived. The second part of the workshop concerns mental images of that which is associated to God. The purpose is to identify that which God values in the world.

Again, the key words are given that are faith terms. The facilitator can record the terms or have the recorder to record the team responses. Even the responding process is significant. Each person is given an opportunity to respond in rounds until all of the answers have been read. The session is conducted in the brainstorming concept. The facilitator should review the list again with the team asking if there are any comments. Then appear to leave that portion of the discussion completely.

At the very next moment, read the scenario in part three. Allow the team to discuss their opinions of the subject of the value of a dollar. Allow time for them to complete their discussion. The facilitator reminds the team of their emphasis upon economics in determining the advantages of being African American. Now, ask what does God value about people. Then, ask does the African American experience offer value in these areas(referring to their answers given about God's value system)

The results should encourage a context associate to offer an impromptu prayer.

Sermon: Read the Sign

The value of the previous seminar and discussion was to emphasize the necessity of reading the Lord's signs as God requires. Values cause individuals to question their own reading of God's signs. The two pericopes are as follows: Daniel 3:14-24 and Matthew 112:46-50. The theme is to be cognizant of the power of the Lord to communicate a message which leads spiritual growth toward freedom from worldly bondage. The message will address the characters that people play in life. The scenes begin to identify an antagonist role and the protagonist role. Characters from the old testament and the new testament demonstrate this same relationship .

The sermon directs the participant to analyze the scenario of the United States and its major characters in decisions and public policy. After analyzing the major characters to define the antagonist and the protagonist, the issue for this society is evident after reading the sign to become committed to follow Christ toward a solution. The message conveys that God's message is the same but the people could not read the sign.

Workshop: Advantages Shared

The final workshop is an opportunity for praise for the learning thus far and the rewards of ministry. The opening prayer, "Heartbeat" (see appendix F-2) is an expression of the journey taken thus far and a petition to God for the future. The context associates are alone at this time with the facilitator to ask any questions of the model. The facilitator, then reads the questions to be used for the discussion when the youth are in the room.

The following issues are addressed and each team composed of the child and its

family are asked to write a team response. The questions are in discussion format:

How do you communicate with your parents?

How often do you discuss issues dominant in the society in which you operate, peer groups?

Does your family love you?

How do you know?

How is love and affection shown to you?

How does your family talk to you?

What is valued in your home? Grades, house work, job, responsibility, etc.

How do you know that this concept has value? What do you really think about this?

Do your friends value the same things as your parents?

Do your grandparents value the same things as you, as your parents?

What do you see as adding value to your life?

If you could determine that which adds value, what would that be for you?

Does God have value?

What value is God?

What can you see that God values?

If you look at God and how God determines value, do you have value in God's eyes?

Can your parents see some of the issues that you face?

Can they help you to see value in your life?

Suppose you can change the thoughts of love toward you by other members of the family?

Part 4

Directions: Allow parents and children to respond to the questions and get a general idea of what should happen and to verify findings. Read through each question and provide adequate time for responses. Do not rush anyone, sometimes there may be a hesitancy to respond. After the last discussion question provide an opportunity for additional comments or questions.

The closing after months of bonding is difficult. The follow is only a suggestion of topics to clearly address. It would appear a time to celebrate and yet, celebration may not be the atmosphere. You might want to at least have refreshments for the discussion session. Prayerfully, God will have removed the so often worn blinders until celebration might be difficult. The children's wounds cut deeply and the revelation of the source of their pain does not grant a spirit of celebration. The community is witnessing the justice systems attempt to manage and control many lives of the community's youth. Younger sisters and brothers cousins too, witness the continuous Christian growth of the church and their parents. As this model is taken to a broader base of churches and continues to

infiltrate the minds of the local church, the next generation has a greater chance of survival.

The agenda is set. The arena becomes your home to encourage discussion along those subjects that are painful. Remember it is difficult to admit that people do not like you. You have experienced that as you attempted to unravel your own buried prejudices. The biracial children are not different in their need for an identity. They want very much to be loved just for being the person that they are, in their skin. Their feelings of pain occur when "grandma openly does not love me because of who I am and that I can not change." The pain occurs when friends and relatives say, " You are not bad looking just too dark." The pain occurs, " When the children on the playground want to beat me up because I am bright with straight black hair." You can hear your son, your daughter, your niece, your nephew, your grandson, your grand daughter say, "But the damage of the pain is unbearable when I tell you and you pretend like nothing is wrong and tell me it will go away, besides everyone likes you."

You have set the stage for the beginning of the remainder of a child's new life in Christ.

To God Be The Glory!

Closing Prayer: Each participant is in the circle pattern, shoulder to shoulder and committed to work together for the support of the whole. Everyone prays in the circle prayer and the facilitator closes.

Post Questionnaire

The post and pre questionnaire are the same form. This form should be placed in the mail. The total population has been involved in the project as it became a part of the worship experience. Ask for their return within one week. Most people with the intention of completing the questionnaire will respond immediately.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTIONS AND SUMMATION

Introduction

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. revealed to the world his legacy not only in his often recounted "I Have A Dream" speech. He leaves a message to all descendants of Abraham, the community of faith, to maintain a sense of dignity and self respect. His legacy is distinctively left to the descendants of African Americans to persevere to :

> Let no force, let no power, let no individual, let no social system, cause you to feel that you are inferior...If we are going to be prepared for this new order in this new world that is emerging, we must believe that [we] are somebody,...made in God's image.[1]

American Indian, Portuguese, French Canadian, African, Hispanic, European, Asian Islanders, Aleut, how wonderfully made. Yet Americans today, the hybrids of cross pollination beautifully and wonderfully made, populate God's created world. A sweeping glance during morning worship across the context reveals God's hybrids, the descendants of Abraham. From this garden will evolve the voices to challenge the prevailing attitudes of persons in the American society to transform from proclamation to praxis as Christ's

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[1]James H. Cone, Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991; reprint, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 71 (page reference is to reprint edition).

model requires.

A poem often quoted by Dr. King is as follows:

> Fleecy locks and dark complexion
> Cannot forfeit nature's claim,
> Skin may differ but affection
> Dwells in black and white the same.
> Were I so tall as to reach the pole
> Or to grasp the ocean at a span,
> I must be measured by my soul,
> The mind is the standard of the man.[2]

A primary objective of this model has been a process of re-identification which, acknowledges culture yet a pursuit toward spiritual fulfillment in the image of Christ.

The summary and reflections on the model are presented in an administrative management format. Each component of the model is directed by the administrative management process theory, total quality management. The individual participant are provided with information and resources to become managers of themselves. For instance, brainstorming procedures equipped the individual participants with the tools necessary to monitor their group responsibilities. The focus group participants' and the context associates' covenant of responsibility is a tool of self government. The components of total quality management has been beneficial in equipping the individuals toward the accomplishment of the group goals. This modified technique provides support to all participants and valueless in establishing an arena of trust. This trust relationship created the atmosphere necessary for the group to become a team. This technique was only one method incorporated as necessary in conceptualizing the spirit of team .

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[2]Ibid.

During the first two month period of the project, the teams became familiar with the dialogue techniques incorporated in the "Ministry of Supervision" model. Each team members' use of the techniques in a compassionate concern for team growth brought each one rapidly to a level of communicating beyond the use of words. The success of the model is dependant upon a powerful presence of the Spirit of God and a management technique that demonstrates the goal of the project. The ultimate goal is increased self worth and a Christ centered identity.

Three objectives toward which, all of the goals are pointing I are clearly stated in the following statements. First, the focus in upon image. It is important to accept that Jesus as Lord is superior by the status of divine. Second, is that identifying in Christ removes an individual's need to be superior therefore, the need for an inferior is removed. Third, the church must cloth the word as action in the heart with Christ as superior. Finally, the objective is for all to work toward the dissolution of conflict. Conflict has its roots in the tension existing between superior's need for an inferior. The goals outlined in the initial process and objectives have provided direction for the participants spiritual growth.

The summary of the findings are outlined in accordance with the following management structure: goals, leadership, time management, planning, analysis and evaluation and participation. The results of the model's impact upon the community and the communities involvement are included.

In the process of implementing the initial project model, some unexpected value issues were not included. Therefore, the model was revised to include an additional

workshop. This section will conclude with the revised version of the model.

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

Project Goals

The personal and ministry goals as stated in the pre-project phase are one means of recording the success of the project model upon the lives of the participants. A reflection upon the goals in the evaluation is presented to assist any a church in determining the value of the model for their church. Each goal will be stated followed by elements of the project designed to accomplish the stated goal. The goals as established in the pre-project phase were the result of dialogue by many of the people who volunteered to serve as context associates. The findings of the project model will reflect the impact of the project goals. The project findings as reflected in the goals are in the order presented in the pre-project planning meeting rather than a systematic prioritization.

The context associates who are lay leaders for this model have acquired a new appreciation for cultural dynamics within group dynamics. Each associate is a parent or grandparent of a biracial person or persons. Their relationship to bond began after a few preliminary activities in the first two meetings. It was not until these three components were present did understanding occur: an atmosphere of trust was established; a united mission as the focus; an acceptance that each participant held pertinent information for the group. An understanding of the relevancy of all experiences initiated an appreciation of their differences. Each person knew his or her own story. However, the stories and

experiences of same family members were being heard for the first time. Mothers and daughters revealed thoughts about themselves and one another never mentioned. Husbands and wives shared pains and bruises of anger and frustration which had remained subverted in the conscious and subconscious mind. The participants realized that more than racial culture influenced their dialogue.

Family conflict which had been excused as a character fault was not accepted as such without a challenge fora more meaningful truth. The challenge of an acceptable or tolerated behavior reorganized individual and group understanding on issues. A child's sense of security and welfare would no longer be sacrificed by tolerating and never challenging injustices. Initial stages of interactions which resulted in persons feeling anxious to push the group toward confronting problem areas dissipated. Confrontational statements, received as means of probing the mind to force truth ultimately led to the revelation of spiritual truths. These persons themselves are the members who found solutions within themselves. Invariably personal findings have a positive impact upon homes and families.

One additional event which may appear to have been negative has a positive influence upon biracial identity crises. Often the person buried inside due the continuous bruises inflicted by society is difficult to reach. Each member had a public face which said that prejudice was not a valid statement to suggest concerning the city of the context. The normal protection or the feelings of rejection provided a shield of denial. Truly this was an emotion to store for further investigation. Any attempts by the facilitator break or crack the wall of protection was of no avail. The subject would be tabled for further

discussion.

The lecture session one, first month on the value of heritage promoted a sense of value by the participants individually and collectively. Similarities of struggles in relation to the broad issues were the consistent but the family dynamics dictated family culture responses. Friends and friendships were important but, the issue of friends had more relevance in one culture than another. One group determined that friendships dictated worth and value to the individual. Though several cultural responses were witnessed in this group, the exposure of oneself had a bonding effect upon the group to develop a stronger concept of team without regard to the various cultures present.

The dramatic presentation pierced the hearts and minds of the participants and the observers. The youth from the focus group and their family members played the character roles in the dramatization of individual pain inflicted by the cold-heartedness of the world. The snowball fight had a dual connotation of the two antagonist elements in the world, Black against White and White against Black reflecting the insensitivity of that relationship. As the biracial component entered the scene and became the protagonist component, the protagonist participation conveyed the possibility of transforming the cold-heartedness concept. Cold-heartedness could have lost its identity and power to control the lives of society. The snow represents the coldness of hatred and prejudice. The two antagonists' ability and power to maintain a retaliation relationship depended upon a unified identity. The biracial component had the innate power to dissolve the issue of conflict as to the component to highlight the world's foolishness as God's wisdom.

During the rehearsals the you youth learned first to mine, then the theological

relevance of the clown ministry. Their playfulness and discussions reflected a limited understanding of God's message to the church through this ministry. All participants were consistent attendees of the church and the church school program. Their participation appeared to be something fun to do while learning about God.

Attitudes of excessive playfulness required immediate enthusiasm to focus upon the completion of this activity. The Christian Education Department of the Third Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church comprised of Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania sponsored a combined area AME founders day worship and workshop program in Columbus, Ohio. "The Snowball Fight" had its debut February, 1997 in Columbus, Ohio. The youth regained a spirit of mission with an approaching opportunity to share their the results of all of their rehearsals. An excited group awaited the clowns ministry debut.

The ministry and the impact upon the participating audience in a clown ministry comedy dramatization depends upon timing and tempo. Each scene leads toward the climactic scene. The youth characters are sensitive to the mood, the comedy and action. The youth were unaware of the ministry to personify the message of God. As the participating audience begins to identify themselves in the characters, the comedy-drama reaches the climax at the personification of the gospel message and its impact upon Christian witness. The audience response to the witness of the message and the presence of the spirit invoked the spiritual message into the hearts of the participants, simultaneously. Their witness of the power of Christ was a new experience. In order for the mind and heart to remain focussed upon the gospel, the action recedes and characters

exit the stage leaving Christ as the focus.

An increase in spiritual awareness was the measurement for the success of the clown ministry with the youth. The transformation in the youth's dedication in service, interest in learning more about God, their desire to develop this ministry in the home church demonstrated their faith growth and a new identity. The dramatization had a transforming affect upon the participants identity as cultural morality was confronted with the biblical morality opposing oppression. One participant began to follow the example of Christ and work her way out of the confusion of internalized race hate to a new identity. Before the end of May, this one youth along with other youth clowns wanted to know whether the church would develop a youth Bible study class in addition to the Church School program. The effect of comedy focusses upon humor in behavior until the thought provoking revelation that God is pointing to the beam of injustice an unrighteousness in a person's own eye.

In addition to progress among the youth, the population after first six weeks of activity began to invite intermarried couples and their families to the church. Some couples had no prior affiliation to the church as a family. They became regular in attendance and some have become members of the church.

As individuals have become members of the church and sensitive to the ministry model they too have begun to question cultural or societies interpretation of morality as opposes to biblical morality. The sermon, "Committed to the Will," determined by the text Amos 5:14-15, 5:18-24, and Acts 9:10-17 referred to the oppressive nature of the Samaritans and Saul's oppression and persecution of the followers of Jesus. The old

testaments reference to the oppressive nature of the Samaritans as wealthy and self-centered practitioners of religious ritual challenged desire for money and possessions. Saul, a zealous practitioner of moral right, who gave his life to Christ in later years. It was his early life contrasted with his later life which, led to the question as to what is moral. Moral behavior was further challenged in the population and by the context associates on religiosity in ignorance driving those seeking a sense of peace from the faith community.

The means by which individuals have learned to value themselves in the world in comparison to what God values became a revelatory encounter in the seminar workshop on God's word. The model was revised to incorporate an additional opportunity to discuss value and redefining value. The response by the population and context associates to the questionnaire on the advantages of Black and the advantages of White revealed the unexpected. The responses by both components were a reflection of a European American value system which relegated a valueless status to the advantages of the African American experience. A disassociation of value to the Black experience amplified the presence of conflict within the biracial child. If no value is given to the black experience then the child's issue is, how can you, the White marry a person of that culture. The child's identity is ambiguous of the value added to his or her life by the black heritage. The parents inadequate response to a question that they are not privy to is the unspoken conflict within the child which, reveals itself in disrespect to both parents.

The discussions on the age when most biracial are having a greater identity crisis than singular race children occurs during the years of self-identification, pre-teens and teen. The pre-teen and teens were most vocal during the focus group because they were

caught in the major crises of their lives, self-identification. The activity on value was vital to the success of the model. The added workshop to the model was, " To Re-value the Value System."

A strong foundation provoking images of value had been laid in the seminar on God. The previous workshop was on the Bible and the message of the Bible for life experiences. The revision to the model began with etymology. Words familiar to everyday life provided a comfort zone for the participants. A word game was played dealing with images and responses. For instance winter, everyone responded verbally. This interaction continued for approximately eight to ten minutes. The next phase of the game was to be written. The technique was based upon the theory of brainstorming. Each participant was given a tablet and pen to respond to the next phase of terms. Their instructions were to write until they could not think of anything further. The brainstorming terms were read aloud individually allowing the completion of ones response before reading the next word or phrase. The group responds were accepted for fifteen minutes or less on the following words and phrase: God, Jesus, Holy Ghost, where did you get and image of God. The responses to the question phrase was included in the brainstorming procedures. Each participant read their response in rounds until the complete information was before the team. The secretary recorded the responses and compiled the list deleting repetitious terms and

phrases.

The next phase was to look at the world and identify that which is value to God and why . Before the activity began the facilitator interjected some thought provoking

scenarios. Then the group reflected upon the advantages and disadvantages of African and European heritage. Every response was based upon the preconceived determination that economic wealth creates value. In this session, individuals were instructed to compose their list of the things that God values about the world. Upon completion, all of the responses were read in rounds to the team. One person interrupted in a loud exclamatory remark paraphrased as, but these are the what we said about God and Jesus. Spiritual awareness peaked for the context associates, the family members of the biracial children. A group of children plagued by the sin of superior's need for an inferior and a cultural morality relegating to a people of God a valueless existence would now have opportunity to hope because of their families' experiences in developing this ministry model. Jesus, the Light of the world had stood by watching this group wrestle with the issues and not quite understanding decided in his grace, at Grace AME to illuminate truth. If the church and its' people would value God and The Lord Jesus Christ and set the standard rather than to follow an ungodly world standard, the biracial community could stand shoulder to shoulder with heirs of Christ in the physical church as well as the spiritual church. Identity no longer is determined by a slave era label nor a misguided culture. Identity is anchored in Christ.

Leadership Style

This project requires a leader with the spirit of peace. Several characteristics and qualities are necessary to lead in the presence of a heritage and a legacy of animosity. This section on leadership will provide encouragement to future prospective leaders as to the

required leadership types, the concept of authority to lead, leadership management of resources. The umbrella that encloses an atmosphere conducive to expressions of trust and anger are the leadership umbrella of communications. Most important is strenuous prayer exercise. The life of the leader and the participants to endure the encounters are a response to a heart wrenching prayer life during the four month period.

The theological foundation provides a perspective on Jesus exemplary of the leadership style for this project. The foundation statement conveys that Jesus had encounters which, means that he did not back away from difficult situations. The scenario of the woman accused of adultery who was brought before Jesus by her accusers is an example of a difficult encounter. Jesus did not respond as the accusers wanted but he did not retreat from the challenge of providing a solution. In that the such a foundation has been laid, this ministry relays a cross-cultural ministry by the different cultures of people that Jesus' ministry touched. Jesus was a facilitator.

This model requires a facilitator style of leadership. Jesus always knew the exact thought provoking question to challenge his team to reach new heights of faith. In order to read the sign in Matthew 12:46-50, Jesus the facilitator asked the question thousands of years ago that continues to have humankind today, still searching their minds for the right answer. Jesus empowered the apostles and the seventy to minister considerate of the needs of people and to cast out demons. Jesus, the encouragement of the world transforms lives in the midst of their storms. This leadership style is required for the task of mentoring, facilitating and leading conflict to a conscious state for dissolution. A heightened consciousness can then realize the need for transformation and the

transforming of lives. This style leadership empowers the participants to become owners of the process in order to be instrumental in the transformation of other lives.

The characteristics of this style leadership include a strong identity in Christ. The teacher or mentor can not teach that which is unknown, "And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit,"[3] Matthew 15:14. It was and continues to be the experiences of reaching for the rose of faith and getting bruised by the thorns providing the strong identity in Christ. The pain of the need for transformation is the thorn but the rose is the power of transformation. The death of a father early in childhood, the death of both grandmothers and one grandfather early in childhood, the preoccupation of family responsibilities, a withdrawing spouse laid the foundation for building a strong identity in Christ.

The leader must be empathetic to the needs of others. Empathy is an extension of oneself to all people when ethnically and culturally secure in ones own identity. Empathy enclosed in a passion for the resolution of conflict is a characteristic that motivate one's prayer life to a twenty-four hour exercise routine. In the middle of conflict the solution to does not reside in producing destructive conflict, rather constructive conflict. A conflict which looks for answers in Christ first and in self.

As individual racial bruises were opened in the presence of the culture that gave the bruises, with many of the emotions of the original infliction of pain present and unresolved, the prayers for the spirit of peace must project. A spiritual presence over the participants for an atmosphere of constructive conflict is necessary. That projection of

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[3]Mt 15:14 RSV

peace to the participants is accepted based upon the integrity of the facilitator. The apostles did not understand some of Jesus' ways but his integrity was never questionable.

In addition to empathy partnered with integrity these qualities must be communicated. The ability to communicate effectively and purposely is necessary.

The leadership style influences the projects success or failure based upon the techniques of communicating and facilitating. Facilitator training is invaluable before attempting to facilitate a group. One facilitator type of training is provided in the Ministry of Supervision by Kenneth Pohly. Another facilitating method is offered in total quality management instructional manuals. The strenuous pace of the project requires a person open to growth, a love for ministry and a clear understanding of the goals.

The capability to manage the functional responsibilities is the sign of a good manager: to monitor performance by objectivity; the management of resources, and to be task oriented. A functional leader must possess the spirit to lead in conflict in order to be instrumental in maintaining an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence.

Time Management

The facilitator or a designated person becomes the time monitor. The focus group teens were extremely vocal therefore they need at least two hours for their discussions. The most effective use of the time is the communicate the different activities to occur during a session. A Saturday afternoon or Friday afternoon, evening will allow the event to transition into a recreation mode.

An element of recreation is present in the workshops even more so than the lecture portion of the seminars. For instance, the discovery session scheduled for approximately two hours extended beyond the scheduled time due to the sharing of experiences. The context associates had refreshments and the agenda was accomplished in a recreational atmosphere. Each workshop was presumed to last approximately one to two hours however, some sessions were extended to three hours. A participant in the team should monitor the time for the sessions.

Planning for the Activities of the project

The effectiveness of the group relies upon the pre-planning by the leader or facilitator. The facilities can be opened by the church secretary or a custodial person. Though persons can change seats, a consistency of the seating pattern alleviates the need to arrange the furnishings. A review of the materials approximately two hours before a session provides adequate time to ensure that resources are available. A primary concern in pre-planning is to test the technical equipment before each session.

Data Collection

The initial impression of the hesitancy of the population to respond to the questionnaire required an analysis of the problem.. This population is predominantly above age fifty. Age and the culture were major implications for determining the method of soliciting responses. Therefore in an effort to replicate the model, an awareness of the age range, culture and environment will assist the facilitator in data collection.

A master form of the questionnaire provided a means of recording the data of each respondent in a comparative manner. This method of recording repetitive responses and tallying is a time conscious analytical process. The names of people and their relationship to others in the group are valuable for understanding some of the visible elements in the group dynamics. For instance a parent or spouse's protective nature is confusing without information on family dynamics.

The information from the master questionnaire was then transferred to a data collection matrix (see appendix G-2). The "x" axis on race was subdivided into black males and white males to compare gender responses. The females responses were subdivided into race. The social issues were charted on the "Y" axis. Based upon the census for this area and its history, the genealogy reflected a culture of biracial individuals as context associates. In a community operating in accordance to the dominant culture, parent and grandparent generations have been recorded in the census as black. Nevertheless, some context associates are direct descendants or second generation descendants of a biracial person.

The matrix on family composition is a document summary of the information received on the initial questionnaire of the population and the context associates. Obvious to the facilitator was that some individuals did not feel comfortable recording information on the forms. In the pursuant discussion, the questions provoked emotions that participants were not expecting and could not respond. A brief glance revealed to some individuals that the questions are written to provoke individuals from the comfort of distorted truths. Until a person were prepared to participate, the questions do appear

difficult.

As parents and grandparents were experiencing difficulty with the issues affecting the biracial children the result is that a child will have an ambiguous sense of identity. Black females with biracial children were not represented though they are represented in the context. White males, who are fathers of biracial children were not present. The matrix and the graph denote the absence of white male participation. Two white ministers were invited for their reflections upon issues relevant for the community in their churches. However, this project was in process during the Lenten Season and Easter which, made it difficult for pastors to participate. This a factor to consider when scheduling.

The matrix summary documenting the value system based upon the responses recorded by race and gender reflects an identity crisis which is communicated to the youth. The project is designed in response to the evaluation of the research findings. Our society projects and individuals absorb. In a community which affirms one culture above others a positive identity becomes an asset in pursuit of goals. In that same community which negates value to a segment of society, identity is distorted and a negative community image can be a liability in pursuit of goals. The findings support the design of the model. Identity crises is the basic concept revealed in the summary of the first questionnaire.

The positive impact of the project was reflected in the post-project questionnaire results. The context responses were recorded by the facilitator in response to discussion questions after the closing session to gather the information. A transformation had occurred. The positive advantages of being African American were as follows: a strong support system, a positive cultural identity, a strong work ethic, strong in faith, growing

faith out of need, a sense of true happiness which money can not buy. This recognition and internalization of meaning are the responses which measure success.

Value systems experienced a metamorphosis during the workshop on value. Persons unclear as to the race of their children began to say that they were biracial and the families understood the issues and pain of the biracial community. The most adamant position of the team was that God is value and that which God values is valuable. That which, is most valuable to God is our saving faith and identity in Christ and how that image is reflected in the world.

During the pre-project discussion and the focus group, individuals shared their expectations. The expectations of the project were to find direction and how to relate. This group has learned the most important means to relate is to listen and communicate value and identity in Christ. The conflict in the family has its solution in the model and a message to the family members particularly when they have faith in Christ. It is a transformation that the Lord provides to the willing participant.

Community Results of the Model

The Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Services Board for Logan and Champaign Counties, issued a request for proposal to fund projects socially beneficial for the cities in the counties serviced by the Board. The project model leader wrote a grant proposal reflecting the benefit of this model of ministry to the community. The second phase of he model beyond the dissertation was to implement a retreat. The retreat was held at a camp

site in Logan County. The target group was the unchurched youth in the city of Bellefontaine.

All youth were extended the invitation to participate in a weekend retreat with the focus on racial conflict and healing. Of the limited number of grants issued in response to the submitted proposals, the proposal from Grace AME Church on racial conflict and healing as designed in coordination with the ministry model Biracial Individuals and the Church: Conflict Evolution and Dissolution was awarded a grant funding 65% of the project.

The Revised Replicable Model

The original format of the model was revised due to some of the primary responses to the questionnaire. One category received predominantly negative responses. This was a signal of an area in need of attention therefore, ministry mode was revised to include a section on values. The revised section of the model is included in the closing of the section summary and reflections.

Re-Valuing

The responses to the questionnaire on value and the communication of value require an additional workshop on the topic of value. Part one is the opening prayer led by one of the context associates. Part two brings the team to the issue of value. The facilitator must assume a leadership position to motivate the team in re- identifying their

concept of value.

The activities begin with an activity on word association and images. The significant key words are: son, sun, sneeze, winter, teacher. It is important to begin to see images and then identify where those images are derived. The second part of the workshop concerns mental images of that which is associated to God. The purpose is to identify that which God values in the world.

Again, the key words are given that are faith terms. The facilitator can record the terms or have the recorder to record the team responses. Even the responding process is significant. Each person is given an opportunity to respond in rounds until all of the answers have been read. The session is conducted in the brainstorming concept. The facilitator should review the list again with the team asking if there are any comments. Then appear to leave that portion of the discussion completely.

At the very next moment, read the scenario in part three. Allow the team to discuss their opinions of the subject of the value of a dollar. Allow time for them to complete their discussion. The facilitator reminds the team of their emphasis upon economics in determining the advantages of being African American. Now, ask what does God value about people. Then, ask does the African American experience offer value in these areas(referring to their answers given about God's value system)

The results should encourage a context associate to offer an impromptu prayer.

APPENDIX A

MONTHLY ACTIVITY CHART

SCHEDULE

MONTHLY ACTIVITY

CHART

Month 1,			
	Pre-Test		
	Pre-Focus group and focus group session		see appendix
	Sermon	I Didn't Ask for This	see appendix
	Lecture seminar	Sensitivity	see appendix
Month 2,			
	Workshop	Discovery	see appendix
	Dramatic presentation	The Snowball Fight;	see appendix
	Seminar	It's Not My Problem	see appendix
Month 3,			
	Sermon	Committed to the Will	see appendix
	Seminar	Camouflage	see appendix
	Seminar	What does God Say?	see appendix
Month 4 ,			
	Sermon	The Sword	see appendix
	Sermon	Reading the Signs	see appendix
	Closing workshop	Redefine	see appendix
	Post-Test		

APPENDIX B

MONTHLY ACTIVITY CHART (revised)

SCHEDULE

MONTHLY ACTIVITY

CHART(revised)

Month 1,			
	Pre-Test		
	Pre-Focus group and focus group session		see appendix
	Sermon	I Didn't Ask for This	see appendix
	Lecture seminar	Sensitivity	see appendix
Month 2,			
	Workshop	Discovery	see appendix
	Dramatic presentation	The Snowball Fight	see appendix
	Seminar	It's Not My Problem	see appendix
Month 3,			
	Sermon	Committed to the Will	see appendix
	Seminar	Camouflage	see appendix
	Seminar	What does God Say?	see appendix
Month 4,			
	Sermon	The Sword	see appendix
	Workshop	Re-Valuing	see appendix
	Sermon	Reading the Signs	see appendix
	Closing workshop	Re define	see appendix
	Post-Test sessions		

APPENDIX C

MONTH ONE OF THE MODEL

Pre-Planning for a Focus Group

Part 1

When a pastor or lay person becomes sensitive of the need to minister racial conflict dissolution, one means is to focus on the embodiment of a person of both cultures or races. The focus group can be composed of persons who are parenting a child of a different race, for instance white families are adopting black children. The focus group can be comprised of persons who are biracial, family members of biracial individuals or single race persons interested in developing a ministry focusing on racial healing. In order to determine interest the Focus Group Interest Card can be distributed during, prior to or after morning worship. A display table may be used in the vestibule. An interest card box can be placed on the table beside the card display for collecting the cards. The pastor or ministries council leader can be responsible for monitoring the box for a reasonable size class. The class can consist of as few as five to seven people. Your class can be composed from the focus group or those persons with an interest in this ministry. The card can also serve as the pre-registration card.

Upon review of the cards, the church's contact person can communicate with each person preferably by telephone to establish a definite time for the focus groups first session. That session would be the information gathering session. That information will become resource data on any issues to be considered in the lectures or workshops. The focus group registration card is provided below.

FOCUS GROUP INTEREST CARD

FOCUS GROUP INTEREST CARD

DATE_____ NAME OF CHURCH_____

Name_____ Address_____ Telephone:_____

Race_____

Age Range

6-10 11-15 16-23 24-44 45-65 65- up

Race of Father_____ Race of Mother_____

Grandparents (father's) Grandparents (mother's)

_____ _____ _____ _____

Have you participated in a ministry to biracial, bi-cultural needs? YES NO

Will you participate in a training to minister to biracial, bi-cultural families? YES NO

The minister for this project will contact you within two weeks about a group.

Pre-Model Focus Group Registration Card

Focus Group Session

Part 1

Opening prayer

Diversity in Me

My Lord and my God, my divine creator of the universe.
My God, who touched the earth in its deepest point
Calling forth some as yellow, others as red, some as pink
But all fragrant roses to illuminate your will for diversity and beauty.

My Lord, Oh God! divine creator of the universe.
It is your counsel that determines the melanin
Some of your children fair, some brown,
Some yellow, some black , some red, some white
But all beautiful, bringing to the garden uniqueness.

Oh God! Divine creator, it is you who provides
The quiet slumber of this warm and vibrant body
As my eyelids close never knowing whether this is my cooling bed
Until between the depths of sleep and the chaos of the day.

My mind wonders if this could be a dream; still here?
The chirping birds break forth natures alarm.
Sparrow, crow, blue jay, wren and wood pecker alike,
The melodious tones of your symphony saying to me "Arise"
To let me know for sure, I am yet alive.

If all of nature reflects the beauty of diversity
Then what is wrong with me to this world,
A world that refuses your diversity in me.
I trust you God to lead me to an understanding.
If I can not understand then to accept what I can not change.

I ask this prayer in the name of your Lamb who died for both black and white.[1]

AMEN.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

Part 2

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

The focus group cards are checked to verify that all interested parties for this session are present. Then the facilitator provides a brief introduction to the model, explaining the goals of the ministry model.

Statement of Goals and Objectives

Personal and ministry goals:

- To have an enhanced understanding appreciation of cultural dynamics for the biracial individual and their family
- To personify God's message of racial harmony while cognitive of ones' identity determined by experience and heritage
- To distinguish between cultural morality and biblical morality
- To augment skill in conflict resolution
- To initiate a Christ based racial healing process which transforms persons from a position of race tolerance to race and cultural appreciation
- To empower the lay ministry with the tools instrumental for working toward harmonious families and faith communities
- To migrate from the traditional limitations to Christian maximization, meaning the limitless possibilities to be accomplished by a few
- To develop a model of ministry cognitive of individual differences in retention
- To improve communications skills: listening, speaking, etymology, colloquialisms.

The statement of goals and objectives may seem long. However, the model has been

developed for the lively participation of the context associates. Let the group know that they will become family to one another during this process.

Part 3

The Covenant

You are encouraged to participate in and initiate dialogue whenever you feel it necessary. Your openness becomes instrumental to your spiritual growth and increases your capability in working others. In order to establish an atmosphere of not attribution, that is not anything said in this group can leave this room which is shared in confidence. Neither is anyone person's name to be linked in any manner with thoughts shared in these sessions. Confidentiality is required in order to establish an atmosphere of trust. Trust is a pre-requisite for openness. Therefore you will be responsible for establishing your atmosphere of trust through a verbal or written covenant. Each participant will covenant with others for your ministry to be successful. As the facilitator, I have shared two elements of the covenant you must express your expectations to this group. They will be recorded and available for you.

You are asked to covenant with each other because it becomes you and yours rather than for someone to obligate you to something not of your own. You might want to covenant with one another to be supportive and being supportive includes consistently attending the sessions. This information should preface the brainstorming session to acquire the remaining components of the covenant.

Each person will suggest their ideas on elements to help make this session

successful. For instance, one person can not "make just" of another. One person in the group can record all of the suggestions. Then the group is to participate in the covenant.

This procedure provides the participants with ownership of the process of the ministry model.

After the covenant is established in the group as they are now or will become your ministers for this model, a time line should be agreed upon for the next sessions. This group should be made aware of each aspect of the model which includes the sermons, workshops, seminars and the dramatic presentation.

Provide time and opportunity to ask questions. At least 15 minutes

Closing prayer (impromptu) and confirm the next meeting date and time.

I DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS

Text: Old Testament Esther 4:10-17
New Testament Romans 8: 26-28

Theme: In our limited existence of time and space, we do not know for what to pray however all things work for good to those who love the Lord.

Can't you imagine that Haggar the Egyptian maid servant to Sarah when informed that she was to know Abraham intimately, that she probably thought to herself, "I didn't ask for this." Needless to say after she was obedient to Sarai yet Sarai was angered by her presence and the presence of the child that Haggar conceived. Haggar, after being put out of her home with Abraham and Sarah while wondering around in the wilderness near death seeing death on her child's face, probably thought, "I didn't ask for this."

When Moses approached Mount Horeb, Exodus 3:2, out of curiosity just to see why a burning bush was not burnt, he had no idea that he would see a theophany that day nor have the opportunity to speak with God about the children of Israel held in bondage in Egypt. Furthermore, he had no idea that God would tell him that it would be Moses himself that God would send to bring the children of Israel out of bondage. Moses was quite open about his amazement because he asked God, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" [1] Be assured that Moses is really saying, "I didn't ask for this."

I can recall watching the television program "Walton's Mountain," as the eldest

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[1]Ex 3:11 RSV

son was trying to complete his studies and one by one each of his younger sisters and brothers interrupted him for something trivial. As he continued to read, the room was becoming quite noisy and turning around, he found all of them sitting and talking on his bed. Running them out of his room, John Boy probably thought about being the eldest and given the opportunity would have said to his parents "I didn't ask for this".

Can you remember your first trip to the dentist. You were probably told by your parents that we have to care for our teeth and the dentist has to make sure that we are doing a good job. As you are being fastened into this mechanical chair and the dentist is properly covering your clothes, you are told that this might be a little annoying as he comes toward your mouth with something pointed and sharp that you would never stick into your gum area. Realizing now that your clothes have been covered because blood is likely to splatter your clothes, there is no way to escape. I can remember saying " let them fall out, because I didn't' ask for this".

Situations of life often cause one to lift up their voices to heaven and utter to God in desperation and despair, I didn't ask for this. Queen Vashti certainly wanted to be a faithful and obedient queen to King Ahasuerus. Certainly as the wife of such a notable person, as the was King of the Persian Empire whose land area expanse was from India to Ethiopia, she knew the importance to the king of a seven day banquet. Also, Queen Vashti knowing of the liberal indulgence of wine and the general condition of the men by this time, probably she rejected to come into the banquet area because of one of the following reasons, for applying reason one can assume: that the petition for her presence was in error; that her appearance at the time would not have been complimentary to her as

a queen; because it would have been impolite to leave the banquet that she held for the women.

The scripture does not provide an answer as to why Queen Vashti did not heed the beckoning call of King Ahasuerus. However, her response is not the only mystery of this passage. The men present at the King's banquet were men of high position in the land noblemen, magistrates and governors. It is truly a mystery that they would feel threatened? Did intoxications' hold upon the men distort their reason? Could her refusal have been perceived by the men as a challenge to their manhood? Should this event have been used to propose that Queen Vashti was challenging the kings authority ? There is only one logical answer for the events as one is able to see into the potential disastrous future for the Jewish population in the Persian Empire. The book of Romans pericope, has a reminder to us of the prayers of the Spirit. The Spirit of God had to pray; the Jewish people could not see the potential for disaster ahead. The spirit of God sees all of our futures'.

One is never totally aware of his or her future. For instance, a policeman was scheduled to be off duty on his regular off day of the week. Such a large number of officers had called in sick until it was necessary to begin calling the off duty officers to work an extra duty shift. This one officer of whom we will refer to as Jack received his call to report for patrol car duty at 1:00 in the afternoon. Jack is riding a new route with a different police officer than his normal partner. This person is new to Jack. At 1:30 a motorist with a child inside was hit by an oil truck. The accident happened on the route where Jack was patrolling. The other policeman was driving when Jack glanced around

the corner and one block away saw the accident. The truck driver was able get out of his truck safely and was checking on the car. The motorist was a woman. The driver pulled her out of the car to safety but the woman kept screaming and pointing to the car saying, "my daughter is in the back seat." The mother with a few injuries stood on the sidewalk watching to see if the truck driver could see her daughter amidst the flames. He was not able to reach the little girl, even though he could see her pinned under metal in the back of the car. At that moment he saw a policeman, Jack rushing toward the accident with a tire iron from the trunk of the police care. Jack knew that someone must still be in the car from the behavior of the trucker. As the driver of the police car, immediately radioed for assistance, Jack broke a window with the tire iron. Frantic of the possibility that a scared, crying little girl would burn to death in a car, though flames were biting at his arms, Jack climbed through the rear window. Smoke filling his eyes, he freed the crying little girl from the pinned position and pulled her to safety.

Jack had often prayed to God, asking what would he do in a situation where fire was involved because only God and Jack knew that Jack was afraid of fire. You never know when God's divine intervention is in charge of your future. Jack was thankful that God intervened in his life bringing him to the point of being so concerned for others that he could not think of himself. When looking at the burning car from a block away, the thought probably went through Jack's mind, "I didn't ask for this." However, after realizing his blessing of freedom from fear, he witnessed to the other police officers about his fear of fire. Jack admitted that as long as he could remember, he has been afraid of fire. Now he tells of the one who saved him and the little girl at the same time. Jack lost

his fear and gained a new understanding of Jesus and the cross. The Spirit never slumbers nor sleeps but remains in continuous prayer.

Likewise, the passage read today from the book of Esther is a witness of God's divine intervention in the events of ones' life when least expected. No one knew that the King would get so lonely for a queen at his side that he would risk another potential embarrassment in order to have a queen. Also when a Jewish man, Mordecai, assumed the responsibility for his uncle's daughter Esther, whose Hebrew name was Hadassah, had no idea of her future, other than a future like many Jewish girls, to marry have children and care for her home and family. Events of life continue to reconfirm our limited existence and God's limitless sight and power.

As King Ahaseurus issued a decree to search far and wide for a fair young virgin as a candidate for queen, the notice went through out the palace. Mordecai as a worker in the palace, placed him in a position to hear that which could be considered the latest palace gossip. Everyone wanted to know all that they could about the most powerful person in the Empire, very much like the world is now. Therefore, Mordecai heard about the King's command and summons for the search. Now, Mordecai new that Esther was a beautiful person. Her features were exquisite and molded with grace. He probably thought that she just might have an opportunity to be selected.

Mordecai did not have a plot. He merely recognized Esther as a beauty and as a young virgin. He decided to bring her to the palace. Mordecai's perspective though that of an uncle was not biased in identifying true beauty because the King saw Esther as a beautiful young woman. King Ahaseurus saw grace, fairness and beauty in Esther and

made her queen. Though a dream come true for many a young lady in the land, Esther probably reflected back to her pain of the death of both her parents and thought, "Out of all of the desires of my heart, I didn't ask for this".

Little did Esther know that the position which brought her to the peak of her happiness would also bring a trial of her faith in a life threatening situation which could provoke the same thought, "I didn't ask for this," with a completely different emotion.

Again Mordecai's position allows him to hear the latest on palace events. In today's colloquialism, Mordecai having tapped into the gossip hot line, heard earth shattering news of a plot to annihilate the Jews in the empire. In Esther 4:10, we read that Mordecai clothed himself in sackcloth and ashes in response to the devastating potential of Haman to enforce his evil, to carry out his act of injustice, to get the hear of power to respond to his political plow for superior recognition. One does not resort to sackcloth and ashes over minor potential catastrophes.

The Bible reveals other occasions when people reverted to sackcloth. According to Genesis 37, Jacob was asked to confirm that the coat of many colors now stained with blood was most assuredly the coat given to his son Joseph. Looking at the coat, Joseph was possibly thinking his son dead and his death was tortuous while trying to protect the family sheep. Only a tortuous death would leave so much blood. His thoughts about his beloved son, of his favored wife Rachel, caused Jacob to put on sackcloth.

According the record of I Kings 21, when King Ahab received the word that his wife, Jezebel would be food for the wild dogs in the street and his family cut off from the face of the earth, his sense of desperation led him to put on sackcloth. When Job states

out of his reality that God delivered him to the ungodly and the hands of the wicked in Job,16, that Job attires himself in sackcloth an attire for mourning in agony. Now, sackcloth is goat's-hair made into a coarse fabric often used to make bags.

Mordecai was so mortified, totally agonized in his spirit of the prospect of the death of all Jews in the empire, until his mourning took the form of dressing in sackcloth and ashes. As he lamented in his soul about all of his friends and his dearest acquaintances all of whom were about to be killed, he remembered his own brothers' child, Esther.

You can imagine that the thought was as if a light bulb had been turned on when the reality of Esther's position could be life saving. Even though Esther was Jewish, as queen she had access to the king in order to squelch Haman's plot to destroy the Jews.

Mordecai sent the message of Haman's plot to Queen Esther, Jewish Esther, the kings favorite, Esther. Esther knew that all of this was truth but she knew something in addition. If anyone were to go to the king, inside the inner court, including Queen Esther, without being called by the king, they were likely to be put to death unless the king grants that person life.

At that very moment, Esther, like many of us would say, stop, hold-it, you are sitting all of the way outside the gate, safe for now. Yet, you expect me to put my life in immediate danger about something that Haman is planning for people who could escape. You can imagine Mordicai's thoughts about Esther's hesitancy which became a dogmatic position of resistance to approach the king in such an urgent matter, a life and death matter. Her response causes us to reflect and question our responses in similar situations.

We too forget the intercessory prayers of the Holy Spirit. "Was my answer of concern for me or could I have been helpful to someone else if my answer had been different?"

Well, Esther may have questioned her response to Mordecai without prompting, without a little nudge, without the force of a kick in the teeth. Mordecai was not taking any chance. Therefore, he sent the message back to Esther reminding her of something, that conveyed the message that "You are a Jew! You might be Queen, but Vashti was Queen and the arm of revenge chocked her out of her position." In other words, the issue for Esther is the possibility of dying now, dying later or not dying at all.

Esther had to decide whether she could trust her faith in God to work in her life or not. She knew the right answer. She knew that God called her as a person of God to stand up for justice for all people. She was not given this position just for the purpose of saving Esther. Neither was her position for the sole purpose of saving she and Mordecai. Esther is probably standing on that narrow balance beam of life, wanting to trust God and to help her people on one side and on the other side wanting to trust God to take care of God's people with someone else's help. You can know that Esther is thinking, "Certainly, I didn't ask for this!"

As Esther is wavering on the balance beam of life, we to waiver on that same beam daily with the opportunity to take a stand for God and justice. A Sunday morning choice occurs when you walk into the church and stroll down the isle to your pew, only to realize from a quick glance that visitors are sitting in your seat. If a prostitute is invited to the church will she be made to feel accepted or rejected? Remember, if she is accepted she will tell others about finding Jesus in this church. When and interracial couple enter these

doors just passing through town and decide to worship with us since, this church is on Main Street, will they know by your looks that they are loved and welcome here? When our youth want to have a social hour in the church do they feel accepted or rejected by the church? When our biracial children are in Church School are we communicating acceptance and love of their white self and black self? If they find love, they will invite others to Christ.

Individually and collectively, we are confronted with the issue, I will not , shall not, I am not going to trust God and extend my myself beyond myself. Rather, I am going to trust God to get someone else. Do you remember a passage from the Bible that says, "To set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace."[2] in Romans 8:6 RSV.

Esther's decision literally meant, If I die then, I die. Daniel with a faith challenge decided, literally, If I die then, I die. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo when their faith was challenged chose, If I die then, I die. Joshua's march around Jericho without worldly weapons was a confirmation of If I die then, I die. As John the Baptist publicly challenges the marriage between Herod Antipas to Herodias, his brother's widow, certainly he is making the statement If I die then, I die. As Peter and Paul, against organized opposition preached Christ and Him crucified though they had been jailed and run out of cities were making a statement to all disciples, If I die then, I die. When John was banned to the Isle of Patmos and his enemies could have found his apocalyptic writing of God and the eschaton could have killed him immediately, John was leaving a legacy to

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[2]Rom 8:6 RSV

future generations, If I die then, I die.

Oh yes Esther, you did ask for this because you wanted to be saved and we are saved by our faith. As the faithful often do not know how to prayer, we have an intercessor. Yes Jack, you too asked for this because you wanted to be saved and we are saved by our faith. Gwendolyn, as a little skinny black girl, climbing trees to eat cherries, you did ask for this because we are saved by our faith and you too, wanted to be saved. You did not know how to pray in order to be saved but the Holy Ghost does know how to pray for you.

Romans 8:26-28 confirms that we do not know how we ought to pray but that the Spirit intercedes for us. Therefore, Grace African Methodist Episcopal Church, you did ask for this, to stand up in the community and sound a voice to challenge this country and global communities to fight racism's battle of Black against White and White against Black. Also, to mourn in sackcloth and ashes if necessary for Americans to remove their oppressive feet off the necks of biracial persons. You did ask to accept the gauntlet of this race from Esther to grow stronger in your faith, to be saved and proclaim to the world "If I die then, I die."

> For all things work together for good with those who love God and called according to God's purpose.[3]
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> Romans 8:28 RSV

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[3]Rom 89:28 RSV

Lecture Session One
Sensitivity

Part I

Opening Prayer: context associates
Prayer on Sensitivity

If you pinch me, I will experience pain,
If you bite me my pain will be marked a bruise
If you bruise me I will need time to heal.
When I am healed I will still know the experience of my pain.

If I can know what inflicts pain
Then why don't I know you too will bruise
If you are bruised then
Time is required for you too shall heal,
Why can't I accept my part in your pain.

Lord, help my insensitivity.
Lord, let me remember to validate the experiences of others,
Lord, if I don't know how to validate, let me be a good listener.
Lord, guide my spirit to heights of awareness and circumcise my heart,
Lord, I need to be guided by the influence and depths of divine love.

Help me, teach me, lead me, console me, strengthen me, heal me.
This prayer I offer for me and my companions in Christ.[1]

AMEN.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
"Prayers From An Apron Pocket"

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

Part 2

Group Introductions: Each participant responds to what I hope to gain from my participation....

Designate a recorder in addition to the leader

Establish the time-line

Establish the contract with the associates: brainstorming to establish responsibility of each member to the other members.

Part 3

Lecture One to the Context Associates

Our Plate is Full

My sisters and brothers, you are representative of the dominant cultural components of this church and the city of Bellefontaine. More specifically, you are representatives of the presence of cultural conflict which did not begin today in the United States. The narrative of the beginning of this country as a nation reveals conflict between people. American Indians, African Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans in the United States share a history of conflict in attempting to live in harmony. In order to navigate from the position of conflict to harmonious relations in this country today, it is necessary to briefly identify some sources of this conflict.

History textbooks from the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's have romanticized the early history of this country. As recently as a 1972 in a college level course on American

History taught the "happy slave" concept and the atrocity of an African American president. European foreparents of this country were portrayed as beautiful, strong, and pure. The cinema embellished this superior status as one of integrity, a demonstrated respect for money and persons who pulled themselves up by their boot straps and possessed expertise in political prowess. Indians nor ethnic minorities were viewed as possessing heroic qualities which would give them honorable mention in the text or the cinema.

A native American business man spoke at the Marriott Hotel in Dayton, Ohio to an association of minority business leaders. In his presentation to encourage unity of communities in order to provide quality service, he highlighted one factor necessary for unity to become a reality. He stressed cooperative and communicating communities. Each person has value from their heritage, from their experiences, from their education and training. A communicating cooperative community recognizes the value that each participant brings in order for a more complete individual therefore, to respect and to work with people is incontrovertible. A talented use of the history of the Indian and Anglo relations in the United States portrayed the detriment of inadequate communications and its possibilities for communities. As a specific example the speaker recaptured the events of a community of Indians living in the state of Florida.

The speaker began by saying that this should in no manner be considered a history lesson, yet it is a part of his history. A group of Indians reacting to the negative relations between themselves and the United States government made an assumption and set procedures in place to eradicate negativism. The United State government would accept

them as equal if they could prove themselves as productive and economically profitable in the business world. Observant of the city model of the U.S., this group of Indians established an economically productive Indian community. The way to prove that the Indian could co-exist with the government, and be economically sound was to develop a business community in the model of the Anglo American. Indian owned schools, grocery stores, and businesses were built and Indian owned banks thrived. All was for nought because the United States government confiscated the Indian holdings. As the speaker continued sharing this event in his history, tears streaked his cheeks and stained his three piece suit. The climax of his presentation was that his people were herded together like cattle, not allowed to carry anything except a marginal amount food and supplies as they were marched west to reservations. His presentation recaptured the essence of the Trail of Tears for the listening audience. You did not read of the Trail of Tears in the history books.

The account of the Trail of Tears is only one of many records of cultural conflict present in the early years of this country. Cultural conflict was either inaccurately reported or omitted from the history text books in the school classroom. African Americans have a history of the Middle Passage which was the unsanitary and degrading existence and the death of many Africans brought to America on slave ships. More detailed records of the Middle Passage can be found in W. E. B. DuBois, The Atlantic Slave Trade. If recorded or portrayed at the cinema, American slavery was portrayed as a romanticized institution beneficial for the social and the economic growth of a nation. This attitude of the beauty of slavery is featured in the classic "Gone With the Wind."

The African American is portrayed as lazy, brainless and happy to be owned as property.

One African American author had his families' story published by Double Day in 1976. His publication would have the effect of opening the eyes of the reader and cause the person of African American heritage to view his or her past with sense of accomplishment. With the cooperation of the movie industry, this man's story became the torch to enlighten the world as peoples of all countries and nations were captivated by televisions' presentation of Alex Haley's, Roots. A romanticized version of the institution of slavery was no longer palatable nor accepted as accurate after the release of Roots.

A strength of character and the instinct to survive the African American wilderness experiences were witnessed by both the American communities and the international community. The hardship of survival was finally realized in the accounts of Alex Haley's family's history: of degradation in slave ships; loss of identity with family and language; children torn from a parents' arms; brutal conditions which wrenched the hearts of crying loved ones'; attempts of the annihilation of selfhood and self worth labeled as chattel. Dick Gregory a political and historical professor, a world known orator and writer on the Black Americans plight in the United States could not paint as clear a picture of the source of tension between the Anglo and African American cultures in lecture series as much as this one movie revealed. The substantive tension which allowed and promoted slavery continues as a realistic tension today.

The media's annual recapture and portrayal of the events surrounding the life and death of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and February's Black History month's acknowledgments highlight a few Black American's contribution to the welfare of this

nation. Though well meaning and better than no recognition at all this marginal recognition is an obtrusive reminder of a continued tension between Black and White. The issue becomes what is the long range impact of January and February's recognition of a limited number of Black contributions to society against the daily documentaries and news portrayals of Blacks as the evil and negative presence in the social order. The nations metropolitan and inner city life feature drug infested neighborhoods through the arrest of Black America as the owners of the problem. As the media featured issues of welfare reform, a black woman with children became the face of the only recipients.

A sense of frustration and tension is prevalent in the Black community toward White oppression. A sense of tension is prevalent in the White community of the potential of Black oppression. This constant tension to determine best or superior has ignited ecclesiastical and secular wars for centuries. American schools as early as the elementary years have promoted this tension between boys and girls. This same tension is the enemy against which many families struggle and loose when one or both parities of the marriage determine that the only resolution is divorce. That same tension was present to cause a Trail of Tears and tears today at the reminder of the degradation. Intense competitiveness in sports, even in the Olympics has its foundation in this tension. The tension is the status of superiority has its being only in the presence of the status inferiority.

Genesis records the presence of the initial tension challenging humankind in the Garden of Eden. The message conveyed to Eve and Adam is that God will no longer be superior if they eat of the forbidden fruit. Evil told them, "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Genesis 3:5.[2] Cain killed Abel because of the same tension that superior needs an inferior. In human nature the status inferior is not complimentary to ones character. Cain's anger was the product of not having his status need fulfilled. Maslow's Theory of the hierarchy of needs identifies primary and secondary needs. Self-esteem is considered a secondary need. The presence of evil has elevated self-esteem to the perception that self-esteem is predicated upon one as the superior, best. Anger, the result of a need unfulfilled lashed out to destroy the superior which Cain assumed would elevate his status.

Les Carter, Ph.D. and Frank Minirth, Ph.D. in their book The Anger Workbook: A 13 Step Interactive Plan to Help You, address several reasons for anger and animosity. They attribute one common source of anger in all humans to the presence of sin.

> Sin gives us a natural tendency toward inferiority feelings; our environment, both a past and present, can also inadvertently intensify its effect on us. In moderating your anger it can be helpful to be aware of two common traps: (1) the trap of succumbing to inferiority feelings and (2) the trap of attempting to be falsely superior. Either of these traps hampers our attempts at anger management. [3]

Carter and Minirth state one position in regard to sin. Herman Bavinck, in Our Reasonable Faith: A Survey of Christian Doctrine, presents his perspective.

> Sin did not break out on earth in the first instance, but in heaven, in the immediate presence of God, and at the foot of His throne. The thought the wish, the will to resist God arose first in the heart of the angels. It may be that pride is the primary sin and this was the beginning and the principle of their fall....in the devil sin began as self-exaltation and pride.[4]

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[2]Gn 3:5 RSV

[3]Les Carter, Ph.D., Frank Minirth, Ph.D., The Anger Workbook: A 13-Step Interactive Plan to Help You (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), 173.

[4]Herman Bavinck, Our Reasonable Faith (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956), 221.

The beginning of sin has been identified. The product of sin is anger but the question remains

as to what is the essence of sin that it can cause a people who have lived on the same land, fought in the same battles to secure the safety of their homeland continue to war against each other. Louis Berkhof in his Systematic Theology provides enlightenment on the essence or nature of sin.

Berkhof analyzes Adam's resistance of God in the Garden of Eden and conveys that

> The essence of that sin lay in the fact that Adam placed himself in opposition to God, that he refused to subject his will to the will of God, to have God determine the course of his life;...In the intellect it revealed itself as unbelief and pride..[5]

Pride colloquially means to respect oneself, ones accomplishments and ones possessions. However the dictionary definition refers to an elevated sense of self worth and to esteem oneself as elevated above others. The attitude of the elevation of oneself higher than others is the pride of superiority that is instrumental in igniting conflict. When the sin, pride is attacked the weapons of superiority and inferiority status immediately create tension in the individual to win the status of superior. This continuous battle for status impedes progress toward the dissolution of anger between the races.

Society's general response to anger is to attack and operate out of ones ignorance. Ignorance seeks retaliation. Retaliation can be seen in many forms such as a physical fight, verbal abuse, or subtle acts communicated in body language. Christians even have

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[5]Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939,1941; repr., 1986), 222.

used a perfectly just phrase to inflict pain in anger by saying "I will pray for you".

Individual and cultural capability to elevate self and relegate to others is the sin of pride even when witnessed in persons proclaiming Christianity. God provides a clear message about pride and its ultimate power to cause humankind to resist the will of God in the following passages:

> Pride goeth before destruction. [6] Prv. 16:18 RSV
> Man's pride shall bring him low. [7] Prv. 29:23 RSV
> For from within, out of the heart of man came evil thoughts.....pride[8].
> Mark 7:21

Pride and the negative actions of society and individuals can be structured to elevate one group and relegate to the other creating an attitude of a superior and inferior group of society or a culture. The propagation of this structure has the power to create an atmosphere of anger and animosity. The overarching discord, dissention, antagonism and friction that was active in the developing years of this country as a nation and continues in existence between the Anglo and African Americans is status, superiority verses inferiority.

As long as individuals allow the sinful need to be superior manipulate their responses to people and situations, persons who are the embodiment of both the Black race and White race will be plagued with pain from both cultures. The need to highly esteem oneself above others is the sin which shackles both cultures.

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[6]Prv. 16:18 RSV

[7]Prv 29:23 RSV

[8]Mk 7:21 RSV

Break

Part 4

Open discussion: context associate led discussion

Confirm the next session, date and time

Closing prayer

APPENDIX D

MONTH ONE OF THE MODEL

Lecture Session Two

Part 1

Opening Prayer: Leader

Discovery
Our Lord, our God, divine creator of the universe

As toddler we chaise birds to never quite catch them

As children, we discover a butterfly which was once a caterpillar

As teens we study biology and body parts in dissecting a frog.

All of our lives we are in a continuous process

A process of the discovery of people;

mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers,

husbands, wives, children, grandfathers, and grandmothers.

Lord lead us to discover you

Lord encourage us to discover your ways

Lord teach us to discover you in us

Lord encourage us to discover, display and

Illuminate you love to the world.

We, the discovery people need Jesus the Christ in this life.[1] AMEN.

Gwendolyn Claude Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

Part 2

Open Discussion: this is an opportunity for reflection from the last session (20 minutes). Leader initiates the session by asking if there are any questions from the last session.

Part 3

Lecture 2 to the Context Associates

Discovery

In the previous session, some of the many issues that were introduced will be the topics of our discussion sessions. It is necessary to face the reality of racism's impact upon the lives of individuals. European Americans and African Americans have endured the physical, emotional and spiritual stress of race prejudices within themselves and the covert and overt prejudices of their own family members. There has been various levels of tolerance and numerous responses to intolerance. The families of Archie Bunker, featured character of "All in the Family" and George Jefferson, the featured character in "The Jefferson's" are exemplary of American prejudice and ignorance highlighted in the form of comedy. The responses from the family members' to the prejudice displays in the main characters is an attempt to discuss the issues surrounding prejudice. On television, the main character is obvious. In our own lives, the identity of the main character is not seen as clearly as prejudice in relation to the biracial person.

We acknowledge the venomous effect of race prejudice upon the uni-cultural individual however this dual impact of race prejudice upon the biracial, bi-cultural individual has and continues to have monumental and disparate effect. In addition to the task of this group in developing and implementing change in families is to look analytically at oneself.

A question format as been developed to assist each one in his or her self analysis. The form has the same title as this session and other members and non-members have completed this information to provide information in developing a perspective in specific areas.

Part 4

Directions are as follows: The questions require short narrative answers. You might want to elaborate on some of your answers. This is not a test, I repeat this is not a test. Your answer can not be a wrong answer because it is your response. You will not be judged by anyone on your responses. It is your tool for measuring your own growth during the next several weeks as we work on this model for ministry.

In order to accurately evaluate yourself, there will be no collaboration (mother-daughter, husband-wife, cousins, siblings, etc.) as to your response. I will be here for any questions of clarity. We will devote the next 30 minutes for the completion of your discovery forms.

Atmosphere: refreshments are in the kitchen please feel free at this time to serve yourselves.

When your self analysis is complete as a group we will discuss the answers and any possibilities of alternative answers to assist in this project.

Discovery Session Questionnaire

1. What is your name?_____

2. What is your race?_____

3. What is the race of your parents and the race of your grandparents?_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What is the race of your children and grandchildren?_____

_____

_____

5. Do you have immediate nieces or nephews whose parentage is more than one race?_____

6. What are some of the positives or advantages of life being of African American heritage?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What are some of the negatives or disadvantages of life being of African American heritage?

_____

_____

_____

8. What are the positives or advantages of being of European American heritage?

_____

_____

_____

9. What are the negatives or disadvantages of being of European American heritage?

_____

_____

_____

10. Is your community divided along racial boundaries, social activities, political activities, educational facilities, economic activities and religious activities?

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What is the level of communication of values, ideas, cultural preferences across racial boundaries?

_____

12. Do you know of any biblical text which addresses race, if you answer is yes will you provide a brief synopsis of the statement?

13. What race does your community categorize a biracial individual, adult or child?

14. How does your church community relate to the biracial individual adult or child?

15. What special needs do you understand that a biracial person might have as opposed to a single race individual?

16. Do you see any advantages of being biracial or disadvantages and what are they?

Part 5

Verbal responses to the questionnaire:

It is enjoyable to hear what others have written in these various areas particularly

since you are representative of the community. Open discussion.

Closing Prayer

Dramatic Presentation

The Snowball Fight

Part 1

A Pre-requisite for the dramatic presentation:

- training to provide the techniques for miming
- if possible use biracial persons of any age for the presentation and their family members
- scripture that supports the Clown ministry

  I Corinthians 1:27

  I Corinthians 4:9,10

  Isaiah 30:15 Passages of biblical confidence

  Psalm 40:5

  Psalm 115:9-13

  Psalm 125:1-5

Part 2

Costumes:

A. Clothes:

Long and loose fitting sweat shirts and sweat pants if the temperature is to hot for sweat tops then quality material tea shirts (loose fitting)

Matching tops and pants in bright bold colors like: orange, yellow, purple, pink, bright blue.

B. Hair and face:

Use solid the colors in clown hair to match the sweat suite worn by the individual

hair	sweats	face (basic white, highlight I.W. hair)
Orange hair	Orange sweats	solid color face, highlight mouth, Highlight eyes,
Blue hair	Blue sweats	
Yellow hair	Yellow sweats	
Purple hair	Purple sweats	
White hair	White sweats	
Blue and White hair	Blue and white sweats	Basic white (soft) w/ blue splotches or dots

C. Feet and hands: last addition in the costume
Boots or shoes at least one size to large
Gloves to match the sweats
Blue and white character has one white glove and one blue glove

D. Narrator: dressed in loud overhauls or full length hoop dress, either one covered with loud color pockets or patches; bright gloves, orange or purple hair and a sign saying "C-H-R-I-S-T is how to spell relief"

Music: a winter storm tape or soft light piano music in the background

Stage Props: A cardboard snowman (six feet) if possible, only for added effect

Characters: Narrator

2 groups of children, each one in solid colors

1 child with the 2 color costume, your biracial person

Prayer: encourage one of your participants to lead the group in prayer. Preface their prayer by saying that this is a serious ministry that we do for God with a serious message. People will laugh and enjoy themselves but when the Spirit of God impacts their lives they too, will become aware of the seriousness of the clown ministry. Let us be joyful fools for Christ.

Part 3

Play:

Parenthesis are used to indicates action.

Music: The musician begins to play softly as children enter, the tempo increases, allegretto. Then when they are in the center in front of the congregation crescendo. Watch for the snowball fight at that point arpeggio the notes. The other scenes can be supported with moderate to soft background, allegretto as the action leaves the sanctuary. A winter storm tape is also effective.

Narrator (Positioned visible at the lectern with a microphone)

Gee, we have not seen a winter storm like this since the big storm blew-in around the middle of the 1970's. (Exaggerated) I mean a storm, why it covered the roof of my house, I could not see in Mrs. Jones house across the street

anymore. The mail is suppose to get through but the mailman couldn't climb over those mountains of snow that the snow trucks left in front of every bodies door. He should have flown by in a helicopter and threw the mail out of the side. It would have at least been in the yard.

Now, I have never seen a snowstorm keep those hooligans of Betty Jane's in the house. If you had to live with one crying, another screaming, one beating on the drums or anybody else he can find, one whistling or blowing that screeching clarinet all day, you would put them out in the snow, hope they got buried in a mound, or lost in the snow. I would even go out and sweep away their tracks so they could not find their way home. Here comes the snow covered brew, now. (Pointing to the back and side entrances to the sanctuary or room)

Clowns: (Only the solid color dressed clowns enter in pairs through the door way; pushing, laughing loud, trying to skip- slide then fall to the floor, pulling one another up, then pushing-off to throw snow balls at any other sets of two entering the sanctuary, loud laughing continues until center stage. Not another sound is made by the clowns)

Narrator: I knew she would put them out in the snow. Aren't they loud! Loud! Loud! They are so noisy until they will probably scare the snow away. The snow trucks and snow plows can take a holiday from this neighborhood. Betty Jane should rent them out to other neighborhoods with all of that noise to scare other people's snow away. Just as pusheeee as they are loud!

Clowns: (large exaggerated steps "your feet are in deep snow"; some fall over,

others pull on the back of one another's shirt. The shortest person pushes "exaggerated pushes" clowns to one side or the other because you are making them into teams. As you push, the pushed clown looses balance as if falling over a boulder size rock, loosing balance some will hit the floor "catch when you fall backward to the side, one foot in the air, both hands and one foot on the floor breaks the fall." Other team members are stuffing snow down the back of their team members shirts)

Narrator: The smallest thing on the ground is bossing everyone else around. It looks like they are going to have a snowball fight. Oh No! No! No! Don't put that cold snow in that shirt. If they belonged to you , you couldn't give them away. Who would want to live with that crew. Wait some of those belong to Jack Ale down the block and his are just as noisy as Betty Jane's . What next snow in the shirt, falling over boulders, sliding on the seat of their pants. They are a scream, they really are. Well,! I never!

Clowns: (Each team is reaches for snow and make exaggerated motion to pack the snow hard, then leans back "some skid backward because of the weight of the snowball in one hand. Others are getting their snowball across to the opposing team. Some use two hands to throw the snowball because it is so large.)

Narrator: I Never!, I have never witnessed a snowball fight like this one before they are the biggest clowns I have ever seen. Wait!, Wait! Oh no! Not in the face.

Clown: (One clown turns back to the opposing team looks out at the audience with a full smile while packing a gigantic snowball. Using both hands run toward the

opposing team and smashes one clown in the face in the head with the big snowball. Now snowface is chasing the snowball face hitter "exaggerated steps")

Clown Bi-C: (The two color clown enters from the rear sanctuary door, hoping, trying to land in the foot prints of the other clowns almost falling, yet waiving at the same time.)

Narrator: Here comes one more yelling, I want to play! I want to play! I WANT TO PLAY!!! Well, they should know by now that one more wants to join the snowball fight and only heaven (exaggerated loud), knows why. Look at them, they are not going to let another player on either team.

Clowns: (Shaking their heads from left to right and from right to left "when A team turns right, B team turns their head left so at alternate turns the opposing teams' heads' face each other" Six full left-right or right-left turns required by both teams at the same time)

Clown Bi-C: (Runs up to one group trying to plead "hands in a prayer position" Then dropping to knees moving from one group to the other hands in prayer position pleading to play.)

Narrator: What?! Gee! Someone really wants to play with their whole heart and soul. They would not dare. They would not dare. Neither team is going tosay yes you can play. What? What? I don't believe it. They are saying, that one does not look like them, not really. They are saying "You do not look like us!". I would have never believed that clowns could be as cruel as humanbeings toward one another.

Clown Bi-C: (Getting up off that wet ground brushing the snow off those pants, turns toward the audience, makes eye contact from the left front seat back and across the room to the right front seated person. Then, drops chin to the chest, rolls shoulders forward in a slump position and with exaggerated moderate steps leaves the stage area down center of the audience and out a rear exit door)

Narrator: (Pulls a loud color handkerchief out of one of those pockets, covers mouth and nose at the same time making a loud nose blowing sound into the microphone. Stuffing the handkerchief back into another pocket. Saying) Well! Jesus did not reject anyone, even when the guards came to take him and Peter cut off the man's ear, Jesus put it back. Jesus was not cruel, unkind or hurtful to people no matter who they were or what they did. I have watched you clowns long enough.

Clowns: (Making snowballs, and now rolling a large ball to make a snowman exit from the closest door near the stage area.)

Musician: Stops playing completely.

Narrator: Just to think in this world, White hatred toward Black and Black hatred toward White does not represent the Jesus I know. My Jesus releases people from an attitude of hate. Just like Rolaids move gas, faith moves mountains, and Jesus moves hate and replaces it with LOVE. That is the Jesus I know, who do you serve? (LOUD) "I hear you, Jesus". (drop voice to moderate tone) you are saying **"I have watched you clowns long enough."**

(The narrator exits)

Lecture Session Three

Part 1

Opening Prayer:
It's Not My Problem

"Help us God to See"

You, who have been our help in ages past,
Who breathed on withered limbs
Causing muscles and tendons to stand at attention;
Gave support to enclosed marrow.
Provided energy for marches through miry clay.

You, who have been our help in ages past,
Looked out, over raging , thrashing waters,
Felt the biting and howling wet winds
Without lifting an arm or hand.
Whispered in a melodious tone like a stroke on crystal,
Peace be still.

It is you God who has been my help in ages past,
Whom I now call on to propel thy people to new mountain peaks.
Through technology interject shock waves to ignite an apology,
For our part in silently and unconsciously allowing
Pain in others by saying "It's Not My Problem."

Grant courage to strive.
Energy to hold out.
Wills plausible
To mold,
and
the desire to reach out to all people.[1]

In Christ Name, AMEN.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimmage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

Part 2

Directions: Television, video documentary,

Workshop With Context Associates

That Which Others Don't See

Today's workshop will include a video taped documentary on racism's effect on college age students in the United States. The title of the video presentation is "Skin Deep: Racism on a College Campus."[2] You might ask why college age students and students from the college community. This tape was selected because it is college students that are preparing their minds to become local, national and international leaders. These students have selected careers which extend approximately a twenty to thirty year period into the future. We are a church community preparing to meet the challenges of society into the next millennium. This documentary is an asset as minds are directed to confront, analyze and solve the prejudicial problems on the horizon. These future national leaders like our children must be prepared to face the covert issues of a multi cultural society.

The producer, director of "Skin Deep" has brought together a culturally diverse group of young people, from different geographical areas of the United States. This microcosm of the nations view on racism is representative of the intensity of the issues from anger to total indifference. This sample group, composed of twenty-one students

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[2]Francis Reid, Skin Deep: College Students Conference on Racism (San Francisco: Newsreel, 1995) video.

will retreat from the physical arena of daily routines to sharing at an extremely personal level. In order for the documentary to serve its purpose for this project, certain issues will be focal points of the dialogue between the students:

- The imbalance in society and the need for affirmative action
- work ethic
- all are judged by the actions of one
- stereotypes and their origin
- the destructive nature of hate upon the hater
- racial insensitivity and insecurity
- benefits of being born Anglo-American
- the perceived inadequacy of economic beliefs for society
- internalized racism (I don't want to be...)
- anger because of parents' pretense of ignorance

Directions: Pause the tape at the end of each of the bold print sections for discussion. Distribute copies of comments and instruct participants to review comments and the notes on a section before and after that section is played (see below).

Begin the tape after the following introduction to some of the documentary participants.

Personal Identity: captured in key phrases

- White male taught: ethnics, Black will kill you, they travel with guns

  No one feels privileged because of their skin color just look in the mirror and feel proud.

- Black male's experience: not a lot of minorities and so a lot of eyes are on you
- Asian male's experience: the first Asians in an all white town
- Black female experience: My sociology professor said to the class, "There is a black student in here tell us how all black people feel."
- American Indian experience: my foreparents had to assimilate in society so much until they lost their identity
- White female experience: I am afraid of being judged by the color of my skin
- Jewish female experience: people make antisemitic remarks but I can assimilate then retreat to home.

Pause

Your first encounter of racism that you recall.

What did you recognize about ignorance in 1995? Are these students' experiences isolated incidence?

Begin the tape

Family relations and comments:

- Imbalance of justice and opportunity-to be able to articulate that you can't have because of racial prejudices
- Economic imbalance which inhibits quality in education
- Italians, the immigrants verses Eastern European immigrants
- White male in an all Black church-nothing in common with the majority people
- They (Black students) must feel that way when they are at " my school"

Pause

Begin the tape
College life in America

- Jewish girl had to face her ethnicity. She never considered herself as ethnic (biracial children trying to figure out what is impacting their life)
- The importance of providing an arena to ask and say that which is necessary for understanding
- attrition of the biracial students from society-living up to their potential
- Lose of self in an attitude of hate
- Black awareness committee (a white student joined to learn more and understand)
- Sitting around at night to see who knows the most slang terms for black people (why are Blacks a target)
- Constantly defending yourself as a Black person, as biracial (attack\counterattack if you had been listening)

Pause

Begin the tape
Retreat: all of the college students from campuses across the country were brought together at one location.

Day One

- History, what about the present issues: ghettos, barrios, reservations
- Self-hate, white society confirms the white child as value while denying the same value of other cultures and black is at the bottom. At least don't defame other cultures.
- Don't categorize all white people because ,feeling blame causes less of a need to

face the possibility of becoming instrumental in the solution.

- There are 22 million black people in this country, if one does something we all suffer.
- Addressed to White America, "You must claim that you benefit from racial attitudes of the past because they continue and those who were oppressed are still fighting the oppression"

White student caucus?

White male: I was taught rugged individualism and it works

White female: The realization that because she is white she is going to receive the benefit of her work but for other cultures that work, they can't get things.

White male: Grandfather fought in the civil war so you know his attitude.(Same student who sat around thinking of slang terms to call Blacks.) My parents are not prejudice.

Day Two

Latin American male: We are not taught our history in school to have something to hold on to that is why Latinos join gangs.

Asian American male: Vietnamese, Chinese, American Japanese, Korean, Tai, Cambodian, Laotian; we are not all Chinese

White male: Asians are quiet and work hard and you don't have to worry about them

Latin American female: She is always told that she must make a choice you can't be both things Latin and White(parents are European and Latin)

American Indian: I have Indian pride in being Choctaw and Chickasaw

Mexican American female: The lighter you are the prettier you are(even though you are dark-)

Pause

Begin the tape

The last day (morning) The complete group assemble for a final discussion

- When you have a bigot in your family you are faced choosing right or family
- You must be willing to talk about racism, hate, issues that arouse pain and anger.
- I am thankful but I am set I don't have to worry about anything you do. (White male)
- If you want to help to alleviate this issue in our society both Black and White have a responsibility to change self first;

  don't believe the stereotypes

  confront daily the issues

  to look at whites and say you might not hate me-I'll risk knowing you

  It is a risk because other blacks will call you a turn-coat, get away from me

Part 3

Assignment: Next week you will have an opportunity to present your case of your most

memorable event of racism. You can give a written account or a verbal account of the event.

You are asked to reflect upon that event with the intention to answer the following:

How did you feel and what did you think?

Were you in control of the situation?

Can you identify your emotions: anger, jealousy, frustrated, hatred, etc.?

Do you recall any mental state which provided you with self protection?

Was your response automatic, preconceived, thought about at the time?

Who were the people involved?

Where did this happen?

Do you recall when this occurred in your chronological and spiritual life?

Did you resolve the situation?

How did you resolve the issue?

What was the issue?

If given the opportunity, what would you change?

All written copies of case studies should be returned to the owner.

Confirm the next meeting date and time

Closing prayer.

APPENDIX E

MONTH TWO OF THE MODEL

Committed to The Will

Text: Old Testament Amos 5:14-15, 18-24
New Testament Acts 9:10-17

Theme: An earth focussed hate denies the presence of love and love rejects the presence of hate.

What would you do? You have come into the church on a Sunday morning greeting everyone with a smile and a kind word. During the in gathering you were certain to greet even those who entered the church after you. The songs of Zion were sung as if God's angel chorus were here in person and if that was not sufficient, the Spirit of God had taken control of the musicians fingers. Then God really poured a miracle forth on the congregation as Jesus himself came forth miraculously to deliver a message that sat every soul on fire to become disciples. Praises to God lifted by every being present. Even as the service closes none are ready to leave because of continuous praises. Then you go toward the door of the sanctuary prepared to depart and share joy with sister and brother worshipers and all that you encounter in the world. As you pass through the exit door, another member wearing a cross looks at you with disdain. But the look is wasted when your spirit is filled with Christ and you can not be cast.

You rise early the next morning rushing to a community meeting and across the table from you at this meeting is the person from church who gave you a scowl of a look on Sunday. A tall fair skin bearded man calls the meeting to order by announcing the

topic for discussion as Prejudice in the City. The church member looks at you and states I hate the fact that people will not stay with their own race and keep bringing theses mixed up children into the world. (Pause) What do you suppose that God has to say about a situation such as the one described? Anyone can make almost everyone feel unwanted.

Amos, a sheep breeder and sycamore fig cultivator by profession from Tekoa in Judah, about 10 miles south of Jerusalem was called by God to preach in Israel. Called out of his profession, called across national boundaries, called to a people of God and yet a people not committed. Amos, not a known and skilled professional orator but he was Committed to The Will. It was out of the spirit of commitment that God knew Amos would respond. As we look at the life of the man, one will learn that Amos had a vision from God. That vision was to speak God's truth to the people of Israel. Amos was a prophet; his message was prophetic. According to the passage read, God was not pleased with the songs of praise, nor the sacrifices being made. Amos was called for such a time as these when God's people sing the songs of Zion on Sunday, exclaiming praise unto His name on Sunday then within the next second, inflict pain with a glance and injury with harsh words on the same Sunday.

Let us remember this can't be about today in our stained glass churches with manicured lawns. Amos' preaching is recorded to have been in Samaria. He was preaching in Samaria during the reign of King Jeroboam. In a time of wealth and luxury, many of the Samaritans had become religious complacents''. According to Amos 2:6(b)-8 some of the daily activities of Israel are revealed:

because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals-

> they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and push the afflicted out of the way;[1]
>
> Am 2:6 (b)-8 RSV

Some would say "Oh that is not bad, I know people in the church who..." We all know people in the church who will, who do, who say, who won't who don't, issue become are you one of these people in the church who are living against the will of God. The behavior of others is not to be the determiner of righteous behavior in Christ. Some one will say that "Jesus said the poor you will have" but does the careless use of the quote give the privileged in society the right to maintain an underprivileged class. When the opportunity arises to help others to become equipped to provide for themselves and their families, have God's people positioned themselves to benefit self or benefit the kingdom. Israel had figured that the most politically, socially and economically feasible action is for each one to help himself or herself.

The issue addressed by God through the oracles prophesied in the book of Amos is, how should the godly people respond in the midst of an ungodly society. In the fourth chapter, Amos warns the wealthy of Samaria. He refers to the women as "the cows of Bashan"[2] Am 4:1. No, let us not attack Amos as a male chauvinist pig before getting a clear understanding of the reason for the reference. Bashan was known for the size of its cattle. No again, not a reference to the size of the women rather metaphorically speaking of their positions of wealth. They could have been prominent powerful speakers for a segment of society which was being oppressed. Instead of seeking ways to destroy ones

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[1]Am 2:6 (b)-8 RSV

[2]Am 4:1

identity, and selfhood, they could have fought for the rights and justice of the needy and oppressed in society. God let the people of Israel know that they were a religious people per se, a people of the enthusiastic practice of ritual but as a people commitment to the will of God they were a sham.

Now someone just might ask the question, how does a person committed to The Will respond to oppression, injustice, forced self denial, in an ungodly society. First, let us state that an ungodly society is the practice of living and surviving at enmity to the preaching and teaching of the Messiah. However, God would not have God's people ignorant or without clarity on the teachings of the Messiah therefore, in the prophetic utterances of Amos, God reveals an answer in

Am 5:14 "Seek good and not evil, that you may live"[3] also in Am 5:15 "Hate evil and love good and establish justice in the gate"[4]. Are you not grateful for your presence today because now you have a license to hate something but that something is called evil. Additionally, you have a license which equips the saints to persevere for the goal Committed to The Will. Committed to the Will causes one to respond to society's oppressive nature with the anvil of justice.

There are many ways by which people can be oppressive likewise, many variables by which one might decide to oppress another. Today instead of looking at how you as a stout person feels oppression or a skinny school girl feels oppression, or a white person feels oppression, or a black person feels oppression or a short person feels oppression. In

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[3]Am 5:14

[4]Am 5:15

an ungodly society where Blacks portray acts of hatred toward Whites and Whites portray acts of hatred toward Blacks. What affect do you think that has on a person both Black and White. Church, these are our biracial children without a home, sleeping where and with anyone to give them a place to lay down, crying themselves to sleep at night, feeling rejected by the white family and black family as they are denied their identity. My beloved, those are our biracial children pointed and degraded in public places.

Let us look at another situation of oppression. Now, go with me to become a tenth grader in the local high school. Being in the tenth grade is difficult enough as you realize that within the next two years you have to decide what you want your life to be like. Colleges are going to increase their tuition over the next several years, unskilled labor positions are disappearing, scholarships and grants will be highly competitive. As a tenth grader, all grades from now until graduation are going to impact the future. If good grades is a major determiner for securing a scholarship then you the student burn the midnight oil, even burn the candle on both ends. Your goals have changed from good grades to excellent grades and respectability among the teaching staff. You are now a senior. This elite community group assemble to review all of the scholarship applicants based upon their grades and proving oneself as a responsible student. The selection is made pending the receipt of background information on the applicants.

Each committee member has a photocopy copy of the applicant now selected to be awarded the four year scholarship to the University of that persons choice. You are the selected candidate until the background check reveals that your mother is Black and your father is White. Ungodly social committee comprised of God's people who refuse to

speak up against injustice, push your application to the bottom of the pile because you are biracial. The committee members of European heritage are saying among themselves, he is Black and we don't owe them anything. Those of African American heritage are saying among themselves, his daddy is White let him foot the bill. All committee members hold prominent positions in their local churches, they have to in order to sit on this committee.

Surprisingly enough as the ballots are cast and God's child is pushed to the bottom of the pile, rejected as an equal creation of God, I can hear God summon his committed servant Amos from the Mount of Samaria across the valleys of Israel over the waters of the ocean, through the wilderness of the desert to your town, "smallville" or metropolitan, USA. Amos in his shepherd skin attire knocks at your church door, a door of injustice and preaches the word of God.

> I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs, I will not listen to the melody of your harps.[5]
>
> Amos 5:21-23 RSV

God is saying particularly to ecclesiastic America today, you want to divide my kingdom but it is not my kingdom you divide. You can imagine God has made some comment about that which he has seen. "I see you in the choir but your hatred makes you sound off-key. I see you ushering at the gate of the sanctuary but your stance about people is defiled. I see you teaching Church School with all of that hatred toward children and that makes your teaching an abomination. I see you serving on the Steward Board, the

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[5]Am 5:21-23 RSV

Trustee board, the Music Ministry Board but your attitude of tolerance puts you at enmity with me. I see you standing in my pulpit trying to preach My word but I'll not show up because your actions blaspheme My name. I see you sweeping My building to no avail with the door of animosity open in your heart and causing many souls to fail."
Beware, your kingdom is an earthly kingdom and mine is a heavenly kingdom, a spiritual kingdom and it is not divided along your boundary lines of racism. You can almost hear God say to the people, "I have loved you even when you did not love me. I have tolerated your injustices and your oppressive, divisive religiosity. A day of judgement shall come as you have joyfully exclaimed but that day holds my eternal justice.

My beloved, Jesus is returning for those Committed to the Will and that is the will of God. Like the children of Israel, God has abundantly poured God's blessings upon White America and Black America. The oracles of Amos have a pattern of blessing, curse, blessing and we have truly been blessed. European Americans were allowed to settle in a land of plenty to worship God in freedom. Africans were descendants of the cradle of civilization and kings and princes of their own land. Then the curse of greed took control of humankind as Anglo slave ships sailed to the continent of Africa. A country unfamiliar to the Anglo, meant riches for the Africans who would bring other Africans for the purpose of selling the captured to the Anglo slave traders. Anglo and African Americans alike lived struggling years of slavery in fear of slave uprisings, the degradation of rape and lynching. Then a merciful and gracious God removed from the Americans this institution of degradation and poured out new blessings. Today we are in the blessing mode of abundance, opportunity and the verge of a new century but rapidly

sliding into another curse.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s prophetic use of Amos to proclaim freedom and justice was a claim for all people. Biracial persons are guaranteed the right to live as free and proclaiming their heritage as any of God's people. Amos said "let just roll down like waters."[6] Amos 5:24. Water running down hill has power! Water running down hill is all consuming in power! Water running down hill will uproot the evil that would consume us! Water running down hill will tear down the walls of hatred! Water running down hill will flood and destroy the blinders to our joint struggle in history that we might fight side by side the injustices of this ungodly society. For when God's people White and Black, Black and White become Committed to the Will of God then, Biracial people, Indians, Asians and all the world will witness

" righteousness like an ever flowing stream"[7] Am 5:24(b) at work not just in ritual but in praxis.

Like God sent Amos to Israel and the Samaritans to prophesy against their behavior, God called Ananias in Damascus, his home and sent him to the street called Straight in Damascus. Ananias did not have as far to travel as Amos, he only needed to be willing to travel the distance of faith. Ananias was afraid of Saul of Tarsus. This was Saul. He testifies himself just how "bad" he is :

> I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city (Jerusalem) at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are this day. I

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[6]Am 5:24

[7]Am 5:24(b)

> persecuted this way to the death, blinding and delivering to prison both men and women, as the high priest and the whole council of elders bear witness. From them I received letters to the brethren, and I journeyed to Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.[8]
>
> Acts 8:3-5 RSV

Can you understand while Amos journeyed over dirt grounds, Ananias travelled a different kind of journey. Ananias journey over blood stained, tear stained, fear stained, endure stained faith in Christ to help the one who held the papers to carry him back to Jerusalem in bondage to his death or a life of servitude. Ananias heard the voice of the Lord. Ananias heard where the Lord wanted him to go. Ananias has to ask the question,

> Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon they name.[9]
>
> Acts 8:13-14 RSV

His may not be grammatically sentence structured as a question, but don't you believe that Ananias is not asking the Lord are you sure that this is the man that you want me to see. He is questioning like many ask today, are you sure because Lord, they will take my home, if I challenge the status quo. They will foreclose on my mortgage if I challenge their position. They will abuse my child if I contradict their procedures. As White fear Black and Black fear White and each their own race, when called by God to make a difference for Christ, the initial response is "But Lord, what about me?"

God is equipping those Committed to the Will to step out on faith. Remember, Jesus said that he would not leave the world comfortless but that the Comforter would

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[8]Acts 8:3-5 RSV

[9]Acts 8:13-14

come. The Comforter, the Spirit of the Living God had to be present in Damascus. The Comforter of encouragement was present in Ananias' house. The Comforter of restraint was present in Ananias' home to keep him from running like Jonah. The Comforter with the shield of God was present with Ananias as he approached the street called Straight. The Comforter of strength and boldness held Ananias hands and guided his words as he stood apparently helplessly before his enemies. The Comforter who grants new identities, breaks down barriers that divide, the abolitionist of fear. It was this Comforter who rose up mightily in the person of Ananias as he,

> laying his hands on him, (Saul) he said, 'Brother Saul the Lord Jesus who appeared to you sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he gained his sight. [10]
>
> Acts 9:17-18 RSV

The same Comforter that met Ananias at his home in Damascus, is the same Comforter that will meet you in the your home in Bellefontaine, Ohio. The Lord is calling you to be the source of sight in your own city first just like the Lord called Ananias. The same Comforter that provided strength to Ananias is here to provide strength to you right now. The Lord equips the committed to do the work and provides the Comforter of abounding faith. The Lord God calls you, the people to stand for love, for justice and for harmony in the Kingdom. The only question left to be answered is, "Are you Committed to the Will to serve the Lord?"

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[10]Acts 9:17-18

Lecture Session Four

Camouflage

Part 1

Opening Prayer:
Dear God Help Me to Remove My "Cover-Up"

Unraveling my hidden and unknown self is sometimes frightening, Lord.
But with your help, I am will to try in order that I might be made whole.
I am apprehensive about the me, I will find stored in the cupboard or
Under the garage floor board.

Some of my pain, some of my fears, a touch of my sorrow, much of my joy and
Such of my anger is stored away in the cedar chest of my mind.
If you ask me Lord, to unlock the door,
The hiding place of the key, I know no more.

God, there are events of this life and scars behind doors that I may not know exist,
But, with your guidance, I chance to explore.
For, there are many standing in need of me,
And all that I am to help them with door .

I implore you to guide me gently and let me peak every once and a while.
That, shock would not overcome me
You would have to scrape me up from off the floor.

Oh! How I praise you Lord for helping me it identify the color codes,
The keys and the spiritual flow.
Also, thank you, God.
For bringing me to the points in my life to endeavor to explore.

I ask you God, to surround me with your abiding presence.
Let my soul experience your essence.
Let you palm stroke my brow.
Extend your balm that I am created a new for my tomorrows.

The beautiful and flawed cover-up, I require nor desire anymore.
The days of gray are creeping on
You, are readying my step for a new dawn.
Mold me, recreate me and make me a new,

For after all God, I'm trying to follow You.[1]

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

Part 2

Workshop

This phase of the model is another of our workshops rather than a lecture format. Ken Pohly, Director of the Center for Supervisory Studies, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, published in 1993 a model of supervision, Transforming The Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision. "Supervision has two foci: the persons in supervision and the ministry they perform."[2] Understanding that you were not in ministry at the time of your event to be relayed today, therefore, the procedure of the written document is termed a Verbatim. Each person will report a dialogue with a person or persons which is a memorable event of racism to the very best of your recollection. The verbatims' of events you have brought with you to share. At this point we will use a modified version of the supervisory technique. That technique is relevant due to our need of transformation for effective ministry.

One of the lessons learned from the documentary reviewed during the last session

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

[2]Kenneth H. Pohly, Transforming The Rough Places: The Ministry of Supervision (Dayton: Whaleprints, 1993) 78.

was that change requires a transformation from within. The students shared however the element necessary for a transformation was missing. The model for transformation must be existential, from within our being. Prescriptions and formulas from the observing community rather than the interacting community are without depth and power to transform. In the letter to the church of Rome in the New Testament book of Romans a primary concern is the essence of survival in an ungodly society, one which separates rather than unit people.

> Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of you mind that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
>
> Romans 112:2 RSV

As we give of ourselves to this workshop our prayer is that God's power continues to guide us in this needed transformation equipping each one present to be instrumental to another person's transformation.

The assignment from the previous session will be discussed this evening. You were given specific ways to be considered in your presentation. As each participant functions in a supervisory capacity, we will consider four steps in your presentation:[3]

Informative, is a photocopy of the event.

- What happened or describe the situation?
- What was your role?
- How did you respond?
- Who were the other participants?

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[3]Ibid, 83

Evaluation, is to look at the issues which are not always obvious.

- What emotions did you experience?
- How do you feel about similar situations?
- Would you do anything differently, is you would make changes then describe?.
- How does your event effect the way that you minister to your child's needs?

  prepared for similar situations

  feelings involved

  judgement of others

Analysis is making obstacles stepping stones toward success.

- What would you have preferred to have happen?
- If given sovereign power what would you change?
- What has been the long term effect of this event upon your life?

Theologizing refers to biblical truths, faith growth and perceptions of God

- Did you realize something about God from this experience?
- Did this experience change your perception of God(think, know, believe)?
- Is there a way for you to convey God to others from your experience of God in this event?
- Is there any impact upon your ability to minister to others?

Procedure: The facilitator should encourage one of the participants to begin by informing the other associates of his or her event. At the close of the presentation on the

information pertaining to the event the event, allow that person to respond to the remaining categories through questions from the associates. Any one not willing to bring an event at this time very well will bring an event before the project is complete. When the last person has shared, identify areas that this group might commit themselves individually and collectively to support biracial families and the children. This is the stage of commitment in this portion of the model.

Part 3

For the last section of session four the leader should read the poem The Cold Within have it read or tell it as a story. Its most effective presentation is in the narrative form.

"The Cold Within"

Six humans trapped by happenstance
In a dark and bitter cold;
Each one possessed a stick of wood, Or so the stop's told

Their dying fire in need of logs,
The first woman held hers back,
For on the faces around the fire,
She noticed one was black,

The next man looking cross the way
Saw one not of his church,
And couldn't bring himself to give
The fire his stick of birch.

The third one sat in tattered clothes;
He gave his coat a hitch.
Why should his log be put to use
To warm the idle rich?

The rich man just sat back and thought
O f the wealth he had in store
And how to keep what he had earned
From the lazy, shiftless poor.

The black man's face bespoke revenge
As the fire passed from sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood
Was a chance to spite the white.

The last man of this forlorn group
Did naught except for gain,
Giving only to those who gave
Was how played the game.

The logs held tight in death's still hands
Was proof of human sin.
They didn't die from the cold without,
They died from-THE COLD WITHIN.[4]

Unknown

Closing Prayer

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[4]Unknown

Lecture Session Five
More God

Part 1

Opening Prayer:
More God

My God , my creator, Oh! Eternal one
If my arms could reach beyond earths gravity,
Past the big dipper, wave to the back side of the moon
Inch past and endure the rays of the sun
I could never grasp the full sense of you.

My spirit informs me that no matter
Where I may travel, Europe, Africa, Asia and on
If I should venture into the land of the dead,
You could find me there.
If I attempted to soar up to the heavens
You would see me coming.

Your Spirit tells me that if by sin
I am lost in a prison pin, I'll find you there.
If by disease and pestilence, I'm rolled away for dead,
Lost in the cold corridor of the morgue, I'll find you there.
If by erroneous choices danger and venomous enemies
Begin to encircle my camp, counting my bones for their spoil, I'll find you there.
If I am in the depths of my mind ,
Lost in worldly wisdom and misguided knowledge, I'll wait,
I'll pray, I'll seek your face, until I find you there.

All praises to the God Who I am yet to know.
By the power of the one able to save me.[1]

AMEN.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimage through life's trials and joys, 1996

Part 2

Introduction to Session Five

Our discovery session was very enlightening and helpful for further research for this model. Your individual commitment toward each participant and the goals of this project is commendable.

The subject matter and how we have chosen to identify ourselves publicly and with other immediate family members cause our efforts to be strenuous on the mind. As it has been our continuous assignment to remain in prayer, as we near the end of the seminar and workshop session, prayer continues as our most effective tool for success and strength. This is an opportunity to revisit any issues or concerns from our previous session.

Part 3

Lecture Five to the Context Associates

What Does God Have to Say?

The documentary focused upon some specific concepts such as work ethics, economic ability, rugged individualism, community cultural relations, power and control. Each concept had an impact upon ones perception and judgement of self and others in this continuous status, battle superior verses inferior. The church and other institutions are in dialogue and sitting at planning tables to determine some of the issues and goals for the twenty first century. Listening to college students from across the United States living in a technological time period of mass communications and computerized access to

information yet, often operate in a mental awareness of the 1940's and 1950's. The power of evil is strange in that hatred and negative attitudes about a race can pass from one generation to another but morality and ethical behaviors are lost in the category of "old foggy." Racism's continuous hold on Americans cause one to consider the consequence of divisiveness.

Let us consider some basic facts in our development to this point. The children in the focus group are biracial or their immediate relative is biracial. Also, our understanding from the accounts of biracial persons reconfirms the reality of conflict often unresolved in a persons of African American heritage and other races. This is not the only situation of conflict as witnessed by the students in the documentary. Other races and cultures are confronted by the challenge to be considered of status other than inferior. As a community of faith let us open our source book, the Bible.

Genesis, the book of origin will be the first reference. The beginning point for this research of the scriptures is a subjective decision. The logic of the decision is to begin with the lives of Adam and Eve before the flood account in history or Noah and his descendants after the flood. Yet another account is of the Tower of Babel which does acknowledge the different cultures. However, Noah's utterances against Ham's son Canaan have been used to justify the inferiority and ultimate slave status of Black America in this country. Therefore, the life of Noah is relevant to the development of this model of ministry.

According to Genesis 5:32, Noah after the age five hundred became the father to three sons whose names are Shem, Ham, and Japeth. Let us pause in the lecture for

volunteers to read the following sections of scripture: Genesis 6:1-18, 7:6-7 and 8:1; 8-19. The scripture clearly states that Noah who walked blameless before God had a wife not wives and concubines. Therefore, one child was not of any race other than that of the parents, Noah and his wife.

Though all three are the descendants of the same two parents, an unethical act dictates a sense of superiority determined by moral conduct and an inferiority status determined by immoral conduct. Now we have a sense of the beginning of morality as a determiner of the status superior and inferior. This concept of superiority is an after the flood acknowledgment because as the text conveys that Noah is righteous and finds favor in the sight of God, Noah did not claim a status of superiority over those considered by God as not righteous. God's selection was one which acknowledged the righteous and not the unrighteous which in God's revelation did not determine a superior verses and inferior race or group of people.

Noah's sin which was to disconnect from the will of God caused him to drink so much until he became intoxicated and then laid naked were his sons could see him. " The first immoral act after the flood is performed by Noah. Proverbs 32:21 and I Corinthians 6:10 confirms that drunkenness is a sin."[2] Some might debate whether Noah new that the beverage would have an intoxicating effect. Leon R. Kass writes in "Seeing the Nakedness of His Father", refers the reader to the initial awareness of nakedness in the Garden of Eden.

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[2]Gwendolyn C. Roberts, "Pushing the "Pause" Button of Life" sermon delivered at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Oh., October, 1993.

"Nakedness there means preeminently sexuality itself...and its link with our perishability are all reasons why sexual self-consciousness is colored with shame."[3]

Noah's son Ham pushed the pause button of life disconnecting with God and committed an immoral act.

It was Ham's act, Noah's utterances, but Canaan and the Canaanites who suffered. The issue is yet debated whether Noah spoke a curse from God, a curse from Noah or prophesy however, the Canaanites were punished for serving idol gods. Serving idol gods is an act which separates one from JHWH. Biblical interpretation's dominant influence has been until recent history, a European approach which focused on Noah's statement as a curse from God and upon the races of African heritage. Those persons' continuing to live in relationship to others based upon the premiss that African Americans are cursed would atomically consider themselves superior.

Race prejudice today in response to the degree of melanin and a curse or prophetic utterance by Noah, against Canaan and Canaanites centuries before Christ's act of salvation is a denial of the power of the cross. The Bible teaches and John the Baptist preached repentance of sin in ones life, and to profess faith in Christ, one shall be saved. Ones belief about God and the cross have such relevance to ones faith until for one to respond to people of dark skin as cursed invokes the necessity to question that type of faith. The issue becomes which has greater power a curse by Noah or the power of salvation in Christ to free one from sin.

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[3]Leon R. Kass, "Seeing the Nakedness of His Father" quoted in Gwendolyn C. Roberts', "Pushing the "Pause" Button of Life" sermon delivered at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Oh., October, 1993.

A Social Impact of Racism in the United States

Race prejudice is demonstrated as one race projects through newspaper, television, news specials a sense of superiority. One of the students in the documentary conveyed that in society; institutions of higher education, the job market, banking systems, the justice system, rather institutionalized racism motivates, encourages, and confirms to White America that they are to perceive themselves as superior. This perspective attributes value to white cultural concepts and negative value to other than Eurocentric concepts.

Historically, in the African American neighborhood every adult assumed responsibility for the welfare of all children in the neighborhood rather than a limited concern for me and mine. Even in completing ones homework, those who understood the lesson or were high achievers had a responsibility to help those incurring difficulty with their lessons. Successes were valued in response to their communal value. Individual contributions of time, talent and effort increased communal value for the accomplishment of a task. Everyone contributing total support increased the life worth of the whole. If a person became a physician, the whole community benefited from that persons' accomplishments and acquisitions.

Let us use the church as an example of communal value necessary for the accomplishment of goals. Someone has to prepare the bulletin; for its most effective use, another will proof read it. On Sunday morning the Ushers use this same tool as a way to greet and meet people, and extend hospitality. Another arm of support is the choir. They

practice and coordinate with the pastor and worship leader on the music. After the preliminaries, they participate in the worship by leading the congregational singing in addition to performing selections not printed for the congregation. The essence is that each ones work ethic and sense of delegated power and authority are fundamental to the community structure. Too, this system initiates support systems. It is not possible to accept "rugged-individualism" as the only acceptable style of building social structure. Some situations require one to be a rugged individual yet, that characteristic must be tempered by Christianity in order for the consideration of others.

In a social structure comprised of different economic levels, some economically achieved and others economically underachieved, the value of ones life should not be equated to wealth. Money should be acknowledged for its value in bartering for necessities. Money nor the pursuit of money for self esteem should not be considered an increase to ones self-worth. Self-worth in a communal environment is identified as using that which you have to bring value to others. God continues to reveal God's position on wealth and richness as a determiner of superiority. Some of the scriptural references about wealth are as follows:

> I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; take you r ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said to him"Fool! This night your soul is required of you...[4]
>
> Luke 12:18-20

For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her

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[4]Lk 12:15-20.

poverty had put in everything she had, her whole living.[5]

God's revelation of God's self says that God values faith and obedience. Other scriptural references as to the non-superior status of richness are: Luke 16:19-31, Luke 12:16-21. When one searches the Bible to argue God's position on a superior race, such polemic is without worth.

Biracial Persons in the Bible

Let us consider Abram (Abraham), called by God from the land of Ur in Genesis 11:29. Though Sarai (Sarah) his wife was to bear him a child for many years she could not. Even after God told Abram (Abraham) that he would be father of nations, Sarai (Sarah) still did not conceive. She gave her handmaiden, Hagar an Egyptian to Abram in order to conceive a child. The child born to Hagar, fathered by Abram was named Ishmael. The account of Ishmael's birth is in Genesis chapter sixteen. Ishmael was biracial from an Egyptian mother and Hebrew father.

Abraham did have a son whose name was Isaac, Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob had twelve children and one of his sons by Rachel his favorite wife was named Joseph. Joseph's story is recorded in Genesis chapters 37-48. Joseph's brothers become jealous of him and sell him to Ishmaelites going to Egypt. Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt.

Joseph who is an Israelite is sold into slavery in Egypt by the Ishmaelites. Joseph does not remain in a slave status because he interprets the Pharaoh's dream, prophesying

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[5]Mk 44.

seven good crop years and seven years of famine for Egypt. The Pharaoh favors Joseph by giving him a position over all of the Pharaoh's possessions and Potipher's daughter, Asenath as a bride. Egyptian and Hebrew parents beget biracial children, and they named their sons Ephraim and Manasseh.

The person to identify with in the scriptures is not whether people were White, Black, Asian, Assyrian, Samaritan, or Biracial, all are to seek the image of the living God in love and fellowship with one another. All are saved by one blood, as previously stated not the DNA rather by Jesus the Christ (JTC).

Part 4

Open Discussion :

value, social value, political value;

What is valued by people in the world? What is valued in school?

Closing Prayer

APPENDIX F

MONTH FOUR OF THE MODEL

The Sword

Text: Old Testament I Samuel 21:8-11
New Testament Ephesians 6:10-17

Theme: Human judgement is the greatest cause of conflict. If you live by the carnal sword which is judgement, then you die by the same sword. If you live by the spiritual sword, then you die under the helmet of salvation.

Props for the Sermon: A real sword with at least an 18 inch blade cased inside its sheath.
Action
Pastor reads the key verses, Ephesians 6:17 and I Samuel 21:8-9. After reading the passages take up the sword in your hands holding it elevated just slightly above your face, then pull the sword out of the sheath. Hold the blade pointing upward still slightly above your face while announcing the sermon topic. Lay the sheath aside but not to far out of your reach. Repeat the topic-The Sword, placing the sword on the podium where it is continuously visible to the congregation.

I need to have you take a journey with me. We will be leaving rustic Jerusalem years be years before Jesus is on the scene. We will be walking but our journey is not to far, just a few miles north east to Nob. Nob is a temple area and that is where Goliath's sword is located. Now that we are here, that dusty, dirty road was not to bad. Let us see what is taking place at the temple. The temple which was considered the seat of faith, the seat of belief, holy and designating the place of sacrifice, worship and divine presence. That image of temple in the hearts and minds of the people was certainly at Nob.

It is David, a little shabby and road weary, even a little disorganized probably from running from Saul. Now let us pause from the current events to understand, why David is running from Saul. Recorded in I Samuel 16:25 we read that Saul was rejected by the

Lord. Not only did the Lord reject Saul but a new king was already chosen by the Lord. Saul, continuing to be the king had no idea that the Lord's rejection of one meant the Lord's selection of another. The Prophet Samuel, following the Lord's road map according to the directions given in I Samuelm 16:1-3.

> The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul seeing I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethelemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." An d the Lord said, Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' And invite Jesse to the sacrifice and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me him whom I name to you".[1]
>
> I Samuel 16:1-3 RSV

You can imaging that Saul, though he did not know of David continued to watch for anyone who could seek the throne. After David had fearlessly killed Goliath, he had convinced Saul to let him join his armies. On one of David's victorious returns from battle the women on the street sang praises to David. I Samuel 18:12 says "Sau was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him but had departed from Saul."[2]

Now the reason is obvious as to why David is running for Saul. One other reason that David is running from Saul is because Saul did try to kill David with a spear. Now release the pause button and let us see the events of the temple during David's visit. David is meeting with the priest Ahimelech but as they are talking, David keeps looking around as if someone were following him. Instead, there is someone already there who knows David and David knows him. It is Doeg, the Edomite, King Saul's chief herdsman.

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[1]I Sm 16:1-3 RSV

[2]I Sm q18:12 RSV

David is really afraid now.

You know what happens when people are consumed by fear. Do you recall this passage of scripture, "God did not give us a spirit of fear but a spirit of power and love and self-control"[3] II Timothy 1:7. Evidently David is so tired of trying to stay out of Saul's fury that he has forgotten what God grants to God's children. Can't you imagine fear's control in your life?

David is even more nervous as his hands are shaking you can see sweat pouring off his forehead. When one is that consumed by fear, one is truly likely to make mistakes. Fear has a way of becoming all consuming, it just takes over the mind, the heart beats rapidly, perspiration glands loose control, the throat gets dry, people have reported that their vision is distorted. When fear reaches the point of all consuming, the voice of God speaking to the hearts of humankind is muffled and often completely blocked. David is about to make a serious mistake in his state of fear because he is not thinking about God's protection.

Listen, can't you almost hear the gasp of fear in David's voice? David is asking the priest Ahemelech if there are any weapons here at the temple. Where would a priest keep weapons. Ahemelech says that Goliath's sword is there. Goliath from Gath, Goliath, who challenged King Saul's guards, Goliath, the one armed for battle in the best and heaviest equipment for battle, Goliath, with the powerful sword, Goliath, the one knocked off his feet to a state of unconsciousness by a shepherd youth. David is asking

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[3]2Tim 1:7 RSV

Ahemelech for the same sword that Goliath was holding when the power of God moved in David to fell Goliath with faith in God and a stone while Goliath is holding the sword in his hand. Is it so difficult to believe that this same David who was not afraid of Goliath is now consumed by fear from Saul? All of the kings army was afraid of Goliath but David had no fear. Now just the appearance of Doeg has caused such fear that David has decided that he needs a sword to fight his battles.

Could this be the same David? David as a youth convinced King Saul to let him challenge a seven foot warrior. The same David who told Saul how God had saved him from bears, lions and other dangerous wild animals. This was the same David who had always escaped Sauls attempts to kill him. Only God could have protected David when Saul threw the spear at David.

For just a brief moment think over your life's journey and the many times when no one could save you except the power and presence of God. I know of a car crash in Tennessee and all of the passengers were killed instantly except for one lady. She was thrown completely clear of the wreck upon impact and had no injuries. God saved her. Syndicated news carried the story of an earthquake in South America. People buried under refuse were brought up dead while a baby was brought up still alive and crying. Who cared for that baby for all of those hours? No one except God. I know of a young woman who was waiting on a bus in Nashville, Tennessee at the corner of 8th and Jefferson streets. Four men in a car, drove it up to the woman in an attempt to force her into the car. She ran to a telephone booth and closed the door. Reaching into her purse for coins for the telephone, she noticed that the men drove the side door of the car against

booth, blocking the door. Still Searching for the coins and finding only paper money, the woman realized that she could not use the telephone. Lifting the receiver, placing it to her ear, she began to pray. Within sixty seconds a police cruiser pulled its front bumper almost against the back bumper of the car blocking the telephone booth door. Immediately, the driver of the car blocking the door drove away. The policeman needed to use the telephone. Who sent the police car at that very moment to this telephone booth? Only God could have saved the woman.

The most powerful sword in the world is the one that David took with him for protection against Goliath. David's fear is such an all consuming force and power that it has taken over his mind. This type of fear is like cancer. Cancer which is malignant splits in a multiplying process and kills by taking life from good cells. Fear, even can be likened to the blob in an old science fiction movie. Fear smothers reason and leaves behind a deranged judgement, a self-serving judgement, or a judgement that denies ones own potential. Fear and its anger provides a poor mental state for judgement. Fear's grip interfers with a person trying to learn to drive a car. Fear's grip blocks the door to education for children. Fear's grip will tell people who have known God for years that they can't pray.

If you think that fear does not distort judgement, look at the presence of fear in the lives of people who knew Jesus and were his apostles. The apostles were almost always with Jesus. Yet, situations of life challenge faith, fear will accept the challenge often and win. The disciples and apostles of Jesus know the grip of fear.

The gospel according the Mark provides the account of Jesus and his disciples and

apostles in a ship when a storm occurred. You can imagine the force of the wind and the water upon a sailing vessel. Water falling from the sky and waves reaching up and over the sides truly caused the disciples to fear for their safety. Jesus was on the ship, even though asleep. The apostles and disciples fear turned on Jesus. The were the same apostles with Jesus in Capernium. A centurion's servant was sick and he sent for Jesus. Before Jesus could arrive, the centurion met Jesus asking him to just say the word to heal his servant. The centurion had faith in Jesus' power whether he touched the servant with his hands or not. These same apostles instead of realizing that in this person was the Living God. The person able to turn water into wine they judged Jesus as complacent and non-caring. Fear told them that they were about to perish and Jesus was not doing anything to change their situation. Fear unsheathed human judgement and caused Jesus' people to lash out and him.

Another event occurred which brought forth fear. Jesus and the apostles boarded a ship and sailed to Magdala. The apostles and disciples with him were responsible for the supplies. Similar to a family picnic or potluck dinner everyone has something to bring or to do. When the disciples were at Magdala, they realized that someone forgot the bread. A sense of fear of reprisal from Jesus or the fear of possibly disappointing him caused the disciples to turn against one another. Judging who should have remembered the bread, who should have reminded someone else, who checked the supplies and didn't notice that bread was omitted. These were the people present when Jesus had just fed the four thousand with seven loaves of bread. Fear, the blob, the cancer had consumed reason and left in its place judgement. Once again, fear unsheathed judgement and struck out to cut

away a persons' character. Judgement causes one to see the beam in the eye of a neighbor before seeing the beam in ones own eye.

Fear seems to have the habit of drawing from the sheath the sword of human judgement. Fear operates in the arena of ignorance and the absence of trust. Each of the biblical accounts, fear of death and fear of repraisal or retribution was a reflection of people who did not know Jesus and did not have complete trust in him.

People are now afraid of the poor. Homeless people whom the church should seek ways to help are considered garbage if they are on the city streets or on the church steps. Local governments are driving homeless from their city or throwing them in jail. Ignorance about the homeless has caused fear to unsheath judgement that considers them dangerous. People with homes are afraid of people without homes. When did economic status determine a person to be a criminal?

Historically, predominantly Black neighborhoods were comprised of persons of different economic means. Neighborhood Watch is an old word and action in the black community. Watch was not limited to looking for strangers in the area who might cause harm. Neighborhood watch meant to make sure that the neighbors had food on the table. Neighborhood watch meant if the neighbors child was having difficulty in school then those doing well had the responsibility to help the slower ones. Neighborhood watch meant because the man beat his wife on an acholic spree the neighbors cared for her and the children to make sure that they were safe. Neighborhood watch in the Black community meant the "haves" helped the "have nots' " rather than judge the " have nots' " as criminals. What happened? My beloved, fear, greed, pride, unsheathed judgement that

poor people are criminals. The presence of fear in the arena of ignorance un leashing human judgement is an element of society which is not acceptable as we prepare to enter the next millennium.

The arrest of Jesus is exemplary of the power of fear to invoke judgement.

> And behold one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him"Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."[4]
>
> Matthew 26:51-52 RSV

The sword of human judgement destroys the person judging and the person being judged. Fear pulled the sword of judgement and struck out to destroy in the arena of ignorance. Jesus said separate from fear. It was Jesus who can restore that which has been destroyed by judgement. As fear of Blacks , fear of Whites, fear of poor, fear of educated, fear of labor fear of Biracial's, fear of men, fear of women has unsheathed the sword of judgement. Just as David's fears unsheathed his judgement to place trust in a physical retaliation, trust God in an enlightened world. Today, that same fear will unsheath the judgement of retaliation. The comment, I'll get you or I'll get you back. God teaches the sword of the world is the wrong choice in a sword.

Action: The preacher lifts the sword, lifts the sheath in the other hand and replaces the sword in its sheath and places it under the podium out of sight. The lifting the Bible opened, holding it in the direction of the congregation states: (This is the sword by which Christians encounter battles and win battles.)

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[4]Mt 26:51-52 RSV

> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities,
> against the powers against the world rulers of this present darkness,
> against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.[5]
>
> Ephesians 6:12 RSV

Our weapon, our gun, our spear, our knife in this spiritual battle is the word of God. "The sword of the spirit is the word of God."[6] Assuredly, David's taking up the sword of Goliath rather than the sword of the word which taught him in his youth to trust God was erroneous judgement. God's word says that human judgement is so off center, so ludicrous, so ridiculous until we can in no manner assume to judge one another with justice.

Consider the account of Tamar with Judah in the 38th chapter of Genesis. Jacob had a son by Leah given the name Judah. Judah was an adult with adult sons. The eldest son married and died without an heir, the second son married the same woman as was the custom at that time. He too died without an heir. According to the tradition (Dt. 25:5-10), Judah was to give this woman to his third son in marriage but he hesitated. In the interim the daughter-in-law of Judah, Tamar became pregnant. She had covered her face to play the role of a harlot along the path where Judah would travel. Judah not recognizing her, laid with her. The price for this chance to be intimate cost Judah but he could not pay. The woman asked for his signet ring, cord and staff. Upon her return to her daily life, communal living with the family of Judah, she was accused of being an

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[5]Eph 6:12 RSV

[6]Eph 6:17 RSV

harlot. According to Dt.22:23-24, in Israel stoning was the punishment for harlots.

She is discovered to be pregnant and will not expose the name of the father.

As head of his family, Judah has the final decsion according to that custom as to Tamar's fate. The issue is brought to Judah and he says that she is to be killed by fire. Judah in ignorance allowed the fear of loosing his position and power to lead his family, condemned Tamar. Again, fear unsheathes the sword of judgement against Tamar as a harlot. Judah said that Tamar was to be killed for her act. Before she was taken to her death which was by fire, Tamar sent Judah a message. "By the man to whom these things belong, I am with child."[7] She sent Judah his own signet ring, cord and staff. Before you can get the beam out of someone else's eye take the beam out of your own. Judah had to admit that Tamar was more righteous than he.

If you judge all white people as evil, God is judging you by the same merciless standard of Justice.

> Judge not, that yoube not judged. For with the judment you pronounce you will be judged,and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in you own eye?[8]
>
> Matthew 7:1-3 RSV

If you judge all white people as evil, God is judging you by the same merciless standard of justice. If you judge that all black people lie and steel, God is judging you by the same merciless standard of justice. If you judge that all lay people are lazy, God is judging you

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[7]Gn 38:25 RSV

[8]Mt 7:1-3 RSV

by the same merciless standard of justice. If you judge that all preachers and pastors are power hungry crooks, God is judging you by the same merciless standard of justice. This is a spiritual battle to divide the people of God down any boundary of separation possible.

Satan's strongest weapon to divide people is the line of fear. Fear blinded the Pharisees to receiving Jesus. This spiritual battle requires the spiritual weapon, the word of God. God's word provokes peace and harmony. God's word provokes love and mercy. God's word provokes patience and grace. It is God's word that provokes longsuffering , self-esteem of others, faith and trust in God. God's word in you will provoke the presence of the power of God's spirit to be victorious in all battles. Unsheath the sword of the spirit then you will seek the kingdom of God and God's righteousness holding to The Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

David took the sword of Goliath but given the opportunity to kill King Saul, David cast down the sword of Goliath and lifts high the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. Saul who lived by the steel sword, died by the same type sword.

Workshop Session

Re-Valuing

Part 1

Opening Prayer

Impromptu (by a context associate)

Part 2

Introduction of procedure

At the last session, each participant was to consider the term value. You were not given any particular instructions other than to think about the term. Today, you will be asked to participate in several fun activities as a way of approaching value.

Directions: I am going to make a few brief statements while you think about God and the world.

Sun	What do you see?
Son	What do you see?
Sneeze	What do you see?
Winter	What do you see?
Teacher	What do you see?

Give each participant an opportunity to share their mental image from each spoken word. Responses in rounds is conducive to promoting the team concept.

Now that you are familiar with the process, it is considered word association and brainstorming. Do not second guess your response by attempting to determine the logic

of the response. Just write the term on the sheet of paper in front of you.

In the previous example each participant provided one response. In this session you are asked to hear the key word or phrase and record as many responses as possible within the time allowed. You will have sufficient time on each one. (Designating time constraints can cause tension be vague, rather that to say that you have one minute or thirty seconds.) Read each key word separately allowing the participants adequate time to respond.

Your key words are: God

Jesus

Where did you get your image of God?

Where did you get your image of Jesus?

When each person has completed their response sheet, encourage each person to take turns in rounds to read the responses on their response sheet. Use this procedure for each term and question. A facilitator or recorder should record the responses and placing a check beside an answer when it is repeated by other members of the group.

Read the list to the participants, noting the similarities in their responses.

Ask, the following questions, allowing everyone an opportunity to respond:

Does God have value?

Can you determine what God values from the combined list? (Have the list read slowly, allowing meditative time on the question and an answer.)

The facilitator or recorder should be recording the responses to the words and phrases provided in the brainstorming on God, Jesus, and the source of the image.

As the team has decided that which is value to God, have the team

responses read once again with the preface:

God says this is value_____

God says this is value_____

Part 3

The facilitator states: A doctor going to pay $5 million dollars per year for the remainder of your life for an arm. It would be surgically removed at no cost. You can have an artificial replacement at not cost. Your left arm has gained new value. In a culture that values money and that which it can acquire, what has happened to owning a left arm?

Ask the following questions and pause for responses:

Are you not willing to sell an arm when you will have a contract and a guarantee of $5 million annually? What affect does the proposition have upon determining value?

Your responses to the questionnaire stated several more responses for European Americans than African Americans.

[The advantages of heritage most often are determined by economic value.

What does God value about us as people? Record the responses.

Now you are asked the question again, "What are some of the advantages of being an African American?

Part 4

Confirm the next meeting date and time
Closing prayer by a context associate

Read the Sign

Text: Old Testament Daniel 3:14-24
New Testament Matthew 12:46-50

Theme: For one to be cognizant of the power of the Lord to communicate a message which leads to spiritual growth toward freedom from worldly bondage.

Where were Jesus' brothers and sisters while he hung on the cross? The gospel according to St. Matthew relates the time when Jesus preaches at Nazareth, which was his home. The listeners are perplexed as to where he could have received such knowledge because they new his family.

> Is not this the carpenter's Son? Is not this his mother called Mary: And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us.[1]
>
> Mt 13:55-56

We just read in our lesson text according to Matthew 12:48 that Jesus himself responds when he is told that his mother and brothers where present, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"[2] Mt.12:48. It might appear that the statement was irrelevant or that Jesus misunderstood the message. It might even cause one to wonder what was Jesus trying to convey. Therefore, our dilemma as 20th century readers of the word spoken by Jesus in Aramaic, scribed in Aramaic by Matthew and translated to Greek by Matthew is

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[1]Mt 13:55-56 RSV

[2]Mt 12:48 RSV

to understand the message that Jesus is conveying through this passage.

Let us first identify those who were Jesus' listeners. Reading from the beginning of the twelfth chapter of Matthew, we learn that Jesus is in dialogue with a group called Pharisees. One group of Jewish religious leaders, considered formalist were called Pharisees. They were devout believers in the Mosaic Law and believed in the oral law to complete the written law. You might presume that if written in the Mosaic Law and interpreted by them it was law. Matthew records several encounters between Jesus and the Pharisees.

Further, Matthew records that a continuous escalating antagonistic relationship was developing in the Pharisees toward Jesus and his apparent disregard for what they considered law. In the twelfth chapter Matthew crystallizes for the reader that the Pharisees are the antagonist and that Jesus is, of course the protagonist, the one around whom all action is centered. It is the Pharisees who are antagonized as Jesus sits with tax collectors and sinners as recorded in Mt. 9:1-8. It is the Pharasees who are antagonized to see Jesus cast out demons as recorded in Mt. 9:34-35. It is the Pharasees and the Sanhedrin who are antogonized with Jesus, accusing him of blasphemy in Mt. 9:3-4 and Mt. 26:65-66.

As we read the opening verses of chapter 12 we realize that the attitude of conflict has elevated from antagonism to confrontational. Hungry and traveling with marginal means, the disciples of Jesus pluck heads of grain to eat on the Sabbath and the Pharisees see this event. In response to their observation of Jesus' disciples, the Pharisees verbally

attack Jesus. "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath"[3] Mt. 12:3 RSV. Jesus' response is not satisfactory. Again as Jesus is in the synagogue the Pharisees confront him. A man in the synagogue with a withered hand provides an opportunity for good and an opportunity for evil. The confrontational Pharisees perceives the man's withered hand as an opportunity to trap Jesus therefore, they ask the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"[4] Mt. 12:10. Now remember Jesus is the Son of God, Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the world, Jesus is righteousness, and Jesus' work is to glorify God. In that the Pharisees are so determined that they possess the only knowledge of right and lawful then, Jesus' answer cannot be pleasing unless it is in harmony with their beliefs. Instead of responding to their question with an answer, Jesus response is in the form of a question.

> He said to them "What man of you, if he has one sheep and it fall into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out: Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath."so that they might accuse him.[5]
>
> Matthew 11:11

Jesus saw the man's as an opportunity to restore the man's hand and to witness the practical application of love for God as service. Instead of receiving Jesus' healing as a witness of the divine will of God that all should be made whole, the Pharisees were so self centered and so antagonized by Jesus until verbal conflict with him had

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[3]Mt 12:3 RSV

[4]Mt 12:10 RSV

[5]Mt 11:11 RSV

elevated their anger to initiate ways to kill him.

It is to these same Pharisees to whom Jesus addresses his comment when told that his mother and brothers were present. If we can remember that Jesus knows that he has a limited amount of time on the earth as a human, to make an everlasting impression on the minds of humankind, to be communicated for many generations then we know that every uttered word is intentional and food for meditation. Know this, the conspiring mind to do evil is to be present with the devil and absent from the knowledge of God. The conspiring Pharisees had forgotten that they asked Jesus for a sign after they had witnessed many signs. In mercy and grace, Jesus gives them another sign.

> And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, Here are my mother and my brothers! For who ever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.[6]
>
> Matthew12:49-50 RSV

We too are a people always asking for another sign when the signs of assurance are all around us. The antagonist were so busy dictating to society the laws determining how everyone should live until they missed the sign from the protagonist, that is the central figure of all of the action, their own sign for salvation. Jesus has stated that the kingdom is at hand and now he is confirming the ordering of family relationships in the kingdom. In the kingdom, family is no longer determined by DNA. Those persons to whom one is born is your family in the flesh but those committed to the will of God must have a new mind. The word conveys that the carnal or earth bound, society bound, peer bound, wealth bound, material bound, mind is death but the mind that seeks the will of

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[6]Mt 12:49-50 RSV

God and to live in accordance to God reflects a spiritual mind.

> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, For those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.[7]
>
> Romans 8:5. RSV

Let us not assume that this message negates a responsibility to love and nurture those who are our earthly family members. Yet, we are not to be so bound by DNA that an adoptive family is of little or no worth. Many a person is a parent who have never fathered or conceived a child.

The message of Matthew is those led by the Spirit of God becomes the sons and daughters of God. If you were led by the Spirit of God how would your life change? God knows. Let me quote the book of Daniel, "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakin king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it"[8] Dn. 1:1. Now let us go to the site where the opportunity to do evil becomes the opportunity for good.

Without mercy the Chaldeans stampeded Jerusalem destroying homes, crops, the temple nothing of value was left standing, not even the walls around Jerusalem. The temple treasuries became loot and their self claimed reward for their trouble. Thousands were taken captive. Many of the most skilled craftsmen of the land. The hierarchy lost their crowns and seats of authority as the king, the kings family, princes and anyone in authority were herded as cattle and marched to Babylon. Youth wondered what had

---

[7]Rom 8:5 RSV

[8]Dn 1:1 RSV

happened as they trailed along with those persons who were once honored and feared because of their power, now seen with no more power than the dregs of society. Youth once taught and trained in the wisdom and finery of life were trailing to a place unfamiliar and foreign. Arrival in this foreign place made life even less appealing as names familiar, a history and family ties were changed to names of the new land. A young man whose name was Hananiah was changed to Shadrach; a young man whose name was Mishael was changed to Meshach; a young man whose name was Azariah was changed to Abednego.

Well, humankind can change a persons name but until you can change their character, you have not accomplished anything. Until God changes your name, the only one able to change character you have changed the name to no avail. These three boys knew who they were and to whom they belonged. God very well allowed their homes to be destroyed, their temple shattered, their family and friends scattered but the God that they knew in the mystery of His being let them know that they were not alone. In a strange land, with strange customs, the strange food and even strange gods, they knew that they had a father in JHWH. With JHWH as their father and mother. That one connection bound them together as brothers.

When King Nebuchadnezzar's prefects, counselors, governors and magistrates convinced the King to sign a decree that upon the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and all of the musical instruments, the Jewish boys along with all people were to fall down to worship the golden image of Babylon. The kings men kept sounding the alarm but the Jewish boys would not move. The kings men became antagonistic about the defiance of these little Jewish boys after all, the central focus at the time of the music

alarm was to be the golden image. Instead, these Jewish boys, whose parents and king were nobody had become the protagonist, the central focus in the event.

The kings men responded no different from the Pharisees. The Pharisees plotted the death of Jesus. The kings men plotted the death of these three Hebrew boys. The boys would not "rat" tattle on who was the leader to convince them to take such a stance. Neither of the Hebrew boys would back down from their position as a brother to serve God. Azariah, Hananiah and Mishael had a right to their identity, their connectedness to their heritage and to the God whom they served. Jesus another protagonist, held fast to his truth and his connectedness to God whom he had come to the world to glorify. A new family has been developing for centuries and its members are those who do the will of the Father.

America wake up. White America is antagonistic against Black America and Black America is antagonistic against White America as to what they can get and where they can go. The reality is the antagonistic forces in this country can be diagramed by an upside down triangle. At the top left is antagonist White America, at the top right is antagonist black America with both hatred culminating at the apex of the third angle of the triangle. Focused and positioned by the power of the antagonist is the protagonist, Biracial America, both Black and White. Black America and White America are the antagonist as the opposing, hostile, counter-acting pressures upon political, social, economic, spiritual and ecclesiastical matters. Biracial's, the living issue of both Black and White conflict are the embodiment of hatred whom action in this country centers.

This ongoing tension and conflict between Blacks and White's have and continues

to have an overarching impact upon all decisions and policies made in the United States. The O.J.Simpson (Black) murder trial against his former spouse, Nicole Brown Simpson(White) caused such a social rift in America until sociologist, psychiatrist and professionals began to investigate its impact. Brown verses the Board of Education a black-white issue; busing for equal education a black-white issue; the civil rights movement, a black-white issue; affirmative action, a black-white issue; education and employment quotas, a black-white issue; fair housing laws, a black-white issue, white flight, a black-white issue; law and order political platforms, black-white issue; economic adventurism and apartheid in Africa, a black-white issue; Haitian refugees given political asylum, black-white issue.

Truly the question becomes who is listening to God. Who can see the sign? Even more importantly, who will respond to the will of God as seen in the sign. This sermon opened with where were Jesus' sisters and brothers as he hung on the cross. First let us see who was not there. The gospel of John 7:5 says that his brothers did not believe. If you do not believe then you will not follow the command of God. The parabolic presentation of the gospel of the seeds that fell on the different types of soil conveys that the word of God will be rejected, up-rooted, and withered away by many and they will not become or remain faithful until the end. Never the less, John 19:25:27, tells us that Mary, Jesus' mother was at the foot of the cross, Mary had a sister at the foot of the cross, one apostle was at the foot of the cross. Therefore we know that those who are willing to do the will of the Father saw the sign and were at the foot of the cross. My beloved, those willing to do that which is the will of God, joins the new family at the foot of the cross and

some are Biracial, some are Black, some are White, some are Native Indians, some are Asians, some are African, some are Europeans, some are Spanish, all are blood sisters and brothers because Jesus shed the blood that binds beyond DNA.

We are a country born of disharmony with the opportunity to witness Christianity to the global community as we pervade society to celebrate our differences much like contracting and expanding muscles. We, Christianity are to mutually move forward into the 21st century committed to Glorify God through collaborative communications becoming members of the New Family at the foot of the cross. Read the sign it is not in the DNA. The sign is written in the blood. The sign binds evil by the power of the blood. The sign creates a new relation pattern Christ is the protagonist and all the world his heirs. Read the sign. The sign lifts one from the state of lost identity to the fellowship of the priesthood of all believers. Read the sign. The sign designates that now is the time. Small city, Metropolitan America now is the time to bind as one Christian different cultures, different people, Biracial, Black, White all children of one God heirs with Christ Read the Sign.

Workshop Session

Advantages Shared

Part 1

Opening Prayer

Heartbeat

God!, Thump, jump, skip---silence, pulse
That is my heart frightened not quite to death.
My soul is afraid that my mind has lost its sight.
I clamor and grasp at my fact, to remove the blinding
patches or to break the poor focussed lenses.
My fingers weak and trembling
Moving at the pace of a turtle, I am an
Ineffective muffle attempting to make the world hear.
I will require your touch of wholeness
Please God don't forget the triple dose of faith.[1]

We need you here.
AMEN, AMEN.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts
Prayers From An Apron Pocket

Each group composed of parents and children beginning at this point:

Prayer: God we your humble servants have prayed, we have cried, we have worked, we have studied, we have come time and time again because God we seek your divine face and direction in the middle of our wilderness experience. These your children are hurt, confused, and bewildered by the world that we have allowed in the middle of our own confusion and pain of a past which is a slur upon your name and the name **human race**. God, as a people of one race, we come to you now with all hope and assurance that you have provided nourishment for us during this journey and have faithfully brought us to your heavenly light.

As we work and pray today, be with us guide every word, thought, deed, meditation that you might be glorified by willingness to follow.

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[1]Gwendolyn Claude Roberts, "Prayers From An Apron Pocket" Collection of prayers on the authors pilgrimmage through life's trials and joys, 1996.

This prayer is offered in the name of our redeemer, your son The Christ[2].
AMEN

Part 2

Introduce the purpose of this part of the project and why the children are present:

By the Facilitator

You have been brought here today to help your parents to minister to your needs as biracial individuals. Many of you have shared some of the conflicts which you have experienced due to the animosity which exists between the races.

You will be asked to help your parents, guardians and family members as they begin to minister to you the relationship which God would have you to establish with the Almighty.

Part 3

The following issues will be addressed and you will be asked to write your response:

How do you communicate with your parents?

How often do you discuss current event issues in, peer groups?

Does your family love you?

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[2]Ibid.

How do you know?

How is love and affection shown to you?

How does your family talk to you?

What is valued in your home? Grades, house work, job, responsibility, etc.

How do you know that this concept has value? What do you really think about this?

Does your friends value the same things as your parents?

Does your grandparents value the same things as you, your parents?

What do you see adding value to your life?

If you could determine that which adds value, what would that be for you?

Does God have value?

What value is God?

What can you see that God values?

If you look at God and how God determines value, do you have value in God's eyes?

Can your parents see some of the issues that you face?

Can they help you to see value in your life?

Suppose you can change the thoughts of love toward you by other members of the family?

Part 4

Directions: Allow parents and children to respond to the questions and get a general idea of what needs to happen and to verify our findings. Read through each question and provide adequate time for responses. Do not rush anyone, there may be a hesitancy to respond. After the last discussion question provid an opportunity for additional comments or questions.

Part 5

It would appear a time to celebrate and yet, celebration may not be the atmosphere. You might want to at least have refreshments for the discussion session. Prayerfully God will have removed the blinders so often worn. Wounds of our children run deep. The justice system is attempting to manage and control many of their lives. Younger sisters and brothers cousins too, prayerfully will witness the continuous Christian growth of the church and their parents. As this model is taken to a broader base of churches and continues to infiltrate the minds of the local church, the next generation has a greater chance of survival.

The agenda is set, the arena becomes your home, to encourage discussion along those subjects that are painful. Remember it is difficult to admit that people do not like you. You have experienced that as you attempted to unravel your own buried prejudices. Our children are not different. They want very much to be loved just for being the person that they are, in their skin. The initial pain occurs when "grandma does not love me openly because of who I am and that I can not change". The pain occurs when friends and relatives say, " You are not bad looking just too dark." The pain occurs, " When the children on the playground want to beat me up because I am bright with straight black hair." You can hear your son, your daughter, your niece, your nephew, your grandson, your grand daughter say, "But the damage of the pain is unbearable when I tell you and you pretend like nothing is wrong and tell me it will go away, besides everyone likes you."

You have set the stage for the beginning of the remainder of a child's new life in Christ. **To God Be The Glory!**

Closing Prayer: Each participant is in the circle pattern, shoulder to shoulder

Committed to work together for the support of the whole.

Everyone prays and the facilitator closes.

APPENDIX G

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Post Model Questionnaire

1. What is your name?_____

2. What is your race?_____

3. What is the race of your parents and the race of your grandparents?_____
_____
_____
_____

4. What is the race of your children and grandchildren?_____
_____
_____

5. Do you have immediate nieces or nephews whose parentage is more than one race?_____
_____

6. What are some of the positives or advantages of life being of African American heritage?
_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What are some of the negatives or disadvantages of life being of African American heritage?

_____

_____

_____

8. What are the positives or advantages of being of European American heritage?

_____

9. What are the negatives or disadvantages of being of European American heritage?

10. Is your community divided along racial boundaries, social activities, political activities, educational facilities, economic activities and religious activities?

11. What is the level of communication of values, ideas, cultural preferences across racial boundaries?

12. Do you know of any biblical text which addresses race, if you answer is yes will you provide a brief synopsis of the statement?

13. What race does your community categorize a biracial individual, adult or child?

14. How does your church community relate to the biracial individual adult or child?

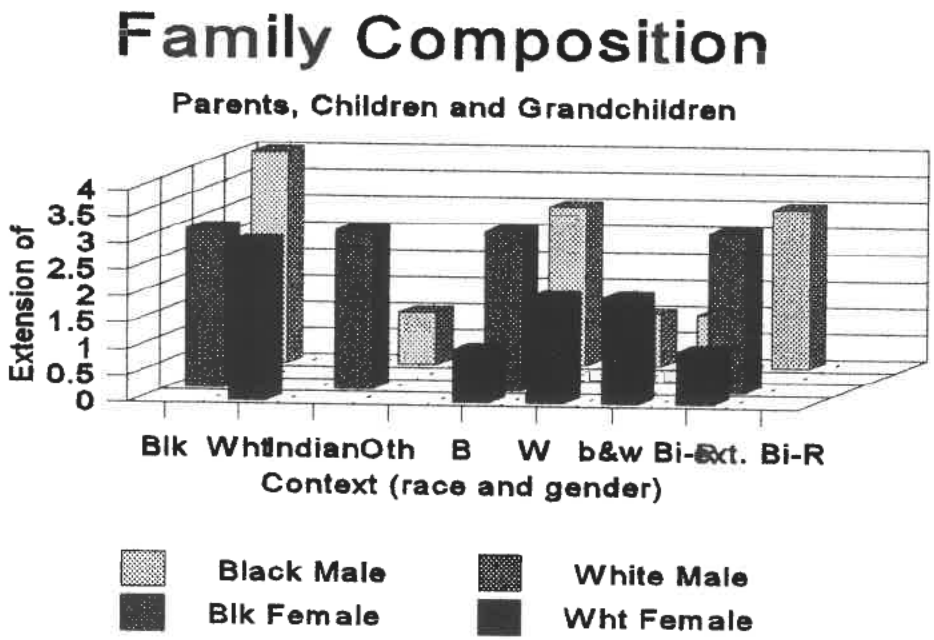
15. What special needs do you understand that a biracial person might have as opposed to a single race individual?

16. Do you see any advantages of being biracial or disadvantages and what are they?

DATA SUMMARY
Pre-Test Population & Context Associates

	Blk	Wht	Indian	Oth	B	W	B&W	Bi-R	Ext. Bi-R
Black Male	4		1		3	1	1	3	Yes
White Male									
Blk Female	3		3		3			3	Yes
Wht Female		3			1	2	2	1	Yes

The data collected above is representative of the context associates personal data.
The continuation on the following page is a narrative record of questions 7 through 16.
All of the context associates did not complete all answers of the questionnaire and their non-response is not documented to affect the findings in a positive or negative manner.



MATRIX OF IDENTITY BASED UPON THE CURRENT VALUE SYSTEM

	Advantages of African Amer.	Disadvan. African Amer.	Adv. European American	Disadvan. Euro-Amer.
Black Male:	Strong Family Affirmative Action Skilled w/ few resources	No equality No jobs Internal Conflict within the race on issues	Accepted Open doors	Affirmative Act. Superiority Atd.
Black Females	Identity w/God Strong Family	Divisiveness within the race Low paying jobs No economics	N/A	N/A
White Females	Don't know Survival on limited Resources Understands both races	Confusion Prejudice People No equality Less jobs No confidence	Advance Faster I am accepted in a White World Purchase Power Treated as human	I think I'm superior? Affirmative Ac.

SOCIAL ISSUES AND THEIR EFFECT UPON IDENTITY

Is your community divided along racial boundaries, social activities, political activities, educational facilities, economic activities and religious activities?

- Yes politics
- Yes, black clubs and white clubs
- Yes, to few black teachers
- A few black businesses
- Yes, black church and white church

What is the level of communication of values, ideas, cultural preferences across racial boundaries?

- Values are transmitted subconsciously/ very little communication of values

Do you know of any biblical text which addresses race, if you answer is yes will you provide a brief synopsis of the statement?

- No

How does your church community relate to the biracial individual adult or child?

- Not sure, seems positive (attends a white church)
- Some show love and welcome them
- The church teaches survival

- We are just beginning to address the issue
- No difference

SOCIAL ISSUES AND THEIR EFFECT UPON IDENTITY (contd.)

What special needs do you understand that a biracial person might have as opposed to a single race individual?

- To know who they are and have pride in both races
- To understand there is good and bad in both races
- To recognize the image of God
- No identity
- Less secure
- Fear
- Unloved

Do you see any advantages of being biracial or disadvantages and what are they?

The answers to the question stated only disadvantages.

- Lost
- No race identity
- No advantages
- Mostly disadvantages

- Positive: have the best of both of worlds

The data presented on the matrix is from the pre-test of the population and context

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

CONTEXT

What are some of the positives or advantages of life being of African American heritage?

- Each one reach one
- Community support
- Extension of family
- Hard workers
- Skilled at making something out of nothing
- Love of the church
- Concern for others
- Learning to identify with the trials of Jesus

What are some of the negatives or disadvantages of being African American?

- Economic disadvantages
- Prejudice people
- Black on Black crime

What are some of the advantages or positives of being European American?

- Economics
- Easy acceptance in most places
- Love for God
- Some are trying to bridge the racial gap

What are some of the disadvantages or negatives of being European American?

- Considered the bad guy
- That others think that "I think that I'm better than them"
- Pride

10. Our community is still predominantly divided along racial lines and other lines are appearing daily.
11. The world is absorbed by the economic value system.
12. I am learning the text that support the mission of racial healing
13. Biracial Children are considered Black or Black and White.
14. After this project the total church is much more sensitive to race and culture.
15. The special needs of my biracial child and grandchildren:

    love, Affirmation Encouragement Identity in Christ
16. The biracial person has some of the same struggles as "I" but they have problems from both races in ways that a single race child does not.

    They have the same advantage to the love of the Lord as all.

GLOSSARY

Collaborative. An attitude and the act of working jointly toward a specific objective. Mutual respect for the value in others to solve issues.

Communication speaking, listening, observing, questioning, responding, transmitting and receiving the message intended.

Cooperative. Working together in an organized productive manner toward a common goal owned collectively with all parties sharing the benefits.

Ignorance an area in which knowledge is absent.

Inferior lower in quality or value than another, low or lower in order, status, rank

Mercy the power to forgive or be kind, practiced as a gift in the life of a Christian.

Superior greater, higher up in rank, greater in value, quality, amount or power, above average, and of high quality.

Uni-Racial attributing ones race and heritage to a singular culture and identity.

Wisdom divine, refers to the infinite Wisdom of God in creation and in the guidance of people and nations.

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The 120 member First Baptist Church Town Mountain of Hazard, KY has received the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Award from the Christian Appalachian Project.